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## ABSTRACT

This text, prepared for college and high school physical education teachers and coaches, describes flagball, a safe and enjoyable alternative to the game of tackle football. The book covers fundamentals, drills to teach these fundamentals, and strategies of the game. The book stresses a practical, hands-on approach to teaching, using sample learning progressions to take the instructor from the basics to game-like scrimmages. The publication is divided into nine chapters: (1) Introduction; (2) Offensive Fundamentals (passing, passcatching, blocking, and ball exchange); (3) Offensive Formations and Play Selection; (4) Defensive Fundamentals (defensive line play, and line backer and defensive back); (5) Team Defense; (6) Special Teams; (7) Coaching Strategies; (8) Rules, Mechanics, and Modifications; and (9) Classroom and Coaching (class organization and schedule, outline of a 10-week flagball unit, skills test for class, evaluation for class, and an example of an athletic team practice). (LL)

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# FLAGBALL FOR THE '90S

Timothy Martin Windemuth

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# **FLAGBALL FOR THE '90S**

**Timothy Martin Windemuth**

**National Association for Sport  
and Physical Education**

**an association of the**

**American Alliance for Health,  
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance**

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2. Communication—to facilitate public and professional understanding and appreciation of the importance and value of health, leisure, and movement-related activities as they contribute toward human well-being.
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4. Standards and guidelines—to further the continuous development and evaluation of standards within the profession for personnel and programs in health, leisure, and movement-related activities.
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6. To conduct such other activities as shall be approved by the Board of Governors and the Alliance Assembly, provided that the Alliance shall not engage in any activity which would be inconsistent with the status of an educational and charitable organization as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or any successor provision thereto, and none of the said purposes shall at any time be deemed or construed to be purposes other than the public benefit purposes and objectives consistent with such educational and charitable status.

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## **DEDICATION**

**Flagball for the '90s is a culmination of information I have gathered throughout my coaching career. Looking back to what has molded my philosophy and had the greatest impact on my professional life, I would have to give the credit to a core of my college professors. These men I hold in highest esteem as Christian physical educators who made a tremendous impact on my professional career. I thank and dedicate this text to these men: Walter Hammerslough, Bill Jarvis, Bill Napier, Marion Pritchard, and Robert Schnieder.**

**Tim Windemuth**

### **SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**Kim Cox  
Mons Jensen  
Bruce Pifer  
Matt Stanfill  
Cheri Windemuth**

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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

G

G



CENTER



OFFENSIVE MAN

10

10



SPACE FOR OFFENSIVE MAN



MAN WITH THE BALL

20

20



DEFENSIVE MAN



DEFENSIVE MAN

30

30



DEFENSIVE MAN



ARROW FOR RUN

40

40



BLOCK

30

30

MAN IN MOTION, SNAP, BALL IN THE AIR

20

20

10

10

G

G

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION



*Flagball for the '90s* is a text prepared for college and high school physical education teachers and coaches. The book covers fundamentals, drills to teach these fundamentals, and strategies of the game. *Flagball for the '90s* stresses a practical, hands-on approach to teaching. Besides illustrating the fundamentals, it uses sample learning progressions to take the instructor from the basics to game-like scrimmages.

Flagball can be played by 6, 7, 8, or 9 players on a team. The text gives sample offensive formations, defensive formations, and plays for each of these teams.

Flagball is played today in junior high schools, senior high schools, and at the college level in intramural programs across the country. Most of us are familiar with tackle football. That is what we see on TV, read about in the newspapers, and visualize when we hear the word "football." There is, however, another game of football that can be just as exciting. Let's look at the way flagball has become such a popular sport.

Recreational football started in the United States at the college level in the 1930s and 1940s. The game evolved from the tackle game and was played as touch football. For safety and improving the strategy of the game, flags were added. Then it turned into flag football and has grown in popularity to the point that coed and powder puff leagues exist throughout the United States.



Throughout the years football has changed from the single wing running game to the passing game to the shot gun formation to the current run and shoot offense. The game of flagball has come through equally as many changes and modifications from 11-player in tackle to anywhere from 9- to 6-player flagball.

Rules for the game have come from many different sources - home spun modified tackle rules to organizations putting together a set of standard flagball rules. As early as 1969 the first national rules for women were published by the Division of Girls and Womens Sports of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. In 1968 the Seventh-day Adventist-Sports Activities Rules Committee (SDA-SARC) came out with a set of flagball rules for their small private high schools and colleges. Earlier, the National Federation of State High School Associations' Football Handbook included a brief section dealing with flag football at the interscholastic level. Then, in 1982, the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) published a rule book in response to the many mixed rules that were circulating.

Rules have changed the size of the fields and this, in turn, has change the strategy. Flagball has surfaced as an outstanding sport that is fun, exciting, and safe. It is definitely a game for the '90s.

Since flagball is played throughout the United States, one would think there would be abundant material written on the subject, but this is not the case. In fact, this is only the third text on the topic to my knowledge. Both of the rule books available, NIRSA and SDA-SARC, are excellent and will be discussed later in the text. Choosing one will depend on philosophy and the needs of the program.

Flagball is a game of speed, quickness, and explosive power. It affords the opportunity to outwit opponents with variations of formations, plays, and skill. Flagball is played with finesse rather than brute strength. Rather than running over people, players run around the opposing team members. In many forms of flagball every player is eligible to catch and run with the ball which keeps everyone involved. Playing the game with fewer numbers of players leaves the field less crowded and lends itself to a wide open game. There is contact in flagball in varying degrees depending on the rules, but not extensive. Consequently, pads, helmets, and other protective equipment are not needed. This greatly reduces the cost of the program as well as cutting down the injury potential.

As a physical education professor and coach, I philosophically support flagball due to the safety factor and minimal physical contact. Because of the lack of physical force, the need to hurt and dehumanize the opponent should not be a factor. Blocking consists of simply moving the player out of the way or utilizing a screen block by putting yourself between the defensive player and the offensive player with the ball.

Flagball is a safe and enjoyable alternative to the game of tackle football. It is a game that can be taught to kids from an early age up through college and into leisure time sports leagues. In our American society, winning can become too important. This author hopes that, just as the emphasis in flagball keeps the physical aspects in perspective, the philosophy of the program will keep winning in relationship too. When the game becomes more important than the players, it has become too important. *Flagball for the '90s* is a textbook that will help you enjoy the game to the fullest in a safe, yet competitive atmosphere.

# **CHAPTER 2**

# **OFFENSIVE**

# **FUNDAMENTALS**



## **A. PASSING FUNDAMENTALS**

### **OUTLINE**

- Define quarterback qualifications
- Passing
- Check list for throwing
- Check list for common errors in throwing
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression

### **QUARTERBACK QUALIFICATIONS**

The quarterback of the team must be a team leader. He/she is the one who will lead the team on and off the field. The coach can call the play, but he/she cannot be in the huddle. The quarterback is the man/woman who must take the ball literally and make it happen. The following is a list of some of the key qualifications needed for a quarterback:

1. Passing ability - both long and short distances.
2. Running:
  - a. mobility is important.
  - b. speed and quickness are the name of the game in flagball.
3. Size - tall enough to see over the line and view the field.
4. Discipline:
  - a. able to stay in the pocket and throw:
    - (1) gives linemen confidence to know where he/she is.
    - (2) receiver picks up the ball better.
  - b. knows when to run:
    - (1) gives another offensive weapon to team.
    - (2) opens things up for receivers.
5. Hands:
  - a. must release the ball quickly on both short and deep passes.
  - b. able to hand off and fake to backs.
6. **QUARTERBACK MUST BE A STRONG LEADER.**

The quarterback must be a master of all offensive mechanical details. He/she is responsible for the exchange from center, various pivots with ball handling and fakes, and perfection in passing and running techniques. He/she must also be a student of the game and know defenses. A quarterback has to be able to think ahead to call the right play. Selecting the quarterback of a team is one of the most important jobs of the coach. Flagball is such a team game that everyone depends on the next player, but it all starts with the quarterback.

### **A QUARTERBACK MUST BE ABLE TO PASS, RUN, AND THINK.**

## **P A S S I N G**

The ability to get the ball to the receiver is usually the easier skill to teach the passer. The technique of passing consists of four basic parts: 1) the grip, 2) the throwing position, 3) the release, and 4) the follow-through.

### **1. THE GRIP**

The most popular method of gripping the football is to spread the fingers over the laces of the ball. This is done by contacting the laces with the fingers. The ball is generally held slightly back of center. The exact placement of the hand on the ball will depend upon the structure of the person's hand. Some passers like to place the thumb on the laces; others disregard the laces. The object is to have a grip that will be secure and will

cause the ball to spiral with its nose slightly up. Having the quarterback throw the ball with a little wobble is desirable and makes it easier for the receiver to pick up the ball.

## **2. THE THROWING POSITION**

Immediately upon receiving the ball and preparatory to the pass, the ball is brought up with both hands to the throwing position just behind the ear. At this point, the nonpassing hand is moved away and in front of the ball. The upper passing arm is approximately parallel to the ground. The non-passing side of the body is facing the intended receiver. The legs are spread about shoulder width apart. The weight is partially on the back foot.

## **3. THE RELEASE**

The ball is thrown from behind the ear with a wrist snap, similar to the catcher's throw in baseball. As the ball leaves the hand, the wrist action is applied by vigorously turning the palm down toward the ground. The drag of the fingers across the ball causes the ball to spiral. The power of the pass comes from the following kinetic chain: the body weight shifts from the back foot, the shoulders are vigorously snapped to face the receiver, the elbow is extended, and the wrist is snapped with the fingers pointing toward the receiver and the palm pointing down.

## **4. THE FOLLOW-THROUGH**

The key to the followthrough is to keep the passing arm from going down across the body too quickly. The downward action of the arm tends to cause the pass to travel in a downward arch. Try to make the hand follow the ball to the desired spot.



### **CHECK LIST FOR THROWING**

1. Grip - fingers spread and secure on ball.
2. Throwing position - ball positioned behind the ear, side of body facing the receiver, legs spread, and weight partially on the back foot.
3. Release - wrist snap, palm down drag of fingers, and follow the kinetic chain of the body.
4. Follow-through - arm across body, but ending in direction of receiver.



## CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN THROWING

1. Check grip of ball - nose may be heading down.
2. Check release point - may be too late.
3. Check speed of pass and wobble - may be throwing too hard.
4. Check throwing action - may be using all arm and no shoulder.
5. Check weight shift from back foot to front foot.
6. Check pointing of front foot at point of release - must be pointing to where the ball is to go, not at receiver or behind receiver.
7. Check the follow-through - may be crossing in front of body rather than the spot where ball is intended to go.

## DRILLS

For accuracy and distance the throwing hand should come across the body.

### 1. CIRCLE DRILL

This drill is intended to warm up arms and legs. Circle clockwise throwing to player directly opposite at a distance of about 10 yards. Gradually increase the distance as you get warm and loosen up. As you rotate, hold the ball high.



### 2. ROTATING ON KNEES

This drill will develop arm strength and wrist snap. At a distance of about 10 yards, throw from a kneeling position. Throw 20 balls

from the right knee, then switch and throw 20 from the left knee. Ball should be kept high and thrown accurately and hard.

3. SITTING AND THROWING

This drill is used for developing arm strength, wrist snap and accuracy. Throw 20 balls from the sitting position. Increase distance as you become stronger and keep ball high.

4. BACK TO WALL DRILL

This drill is for throwing strength, not accuracy. Stand with the back about one foot from a wall. Raise the ball to a throwing position overhead. Release the ball from this position at distances from 15 to 20 yards. Throw 20 balls.

5. QUICK RELEASE DRILL

This drill develops quick release and accuracy. Stand about 12 yards from your partner. Simultaneously throw the ball. Keep the passes high and catch and throw back as quickly as possible. Accuracy as well as quickness is important. Gradually increase the throwing distance as you become more accurate and quicker.

6. DEEP BALL DRILL

This drill develops high release for throwing over the arms of on-rushing linemen. Set up an object behind the goal post that is 10 feet high. Throw deep patterns with as much accuracy as possible. Try to work close to the bar of the goal post while maintaining accuracy.

7. PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

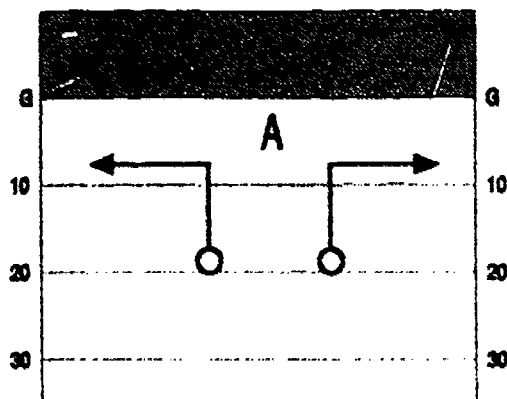


**CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION**

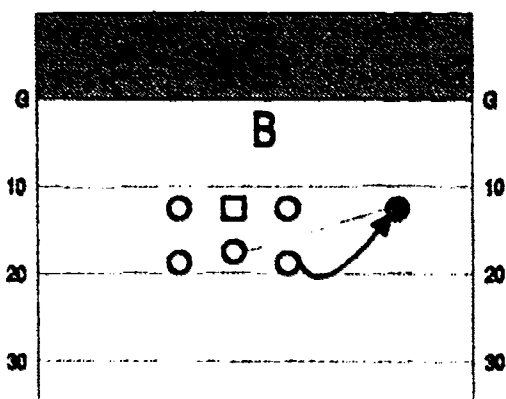
1. Teach the grip, throwing position, release, and the follow-through.
2. Work with the quarterback on hitting his/her receivers. Timing is a big key to good pass execution.
3. Work with quarterback on throwing all the listed types of passes and putting them to the right spot to the receiver.
4. Leadership is the key. The coach can only call the play; the quarterback must be the leader on the field. This area needs to be worked on throughout the season, in what we call "seasoning" the quarterback.



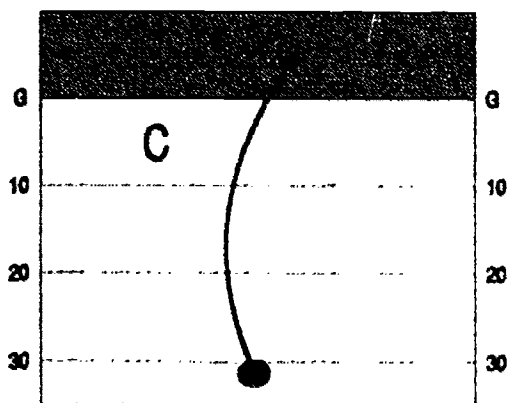
## 8. TYPES OF PASSES TO WORK ON:



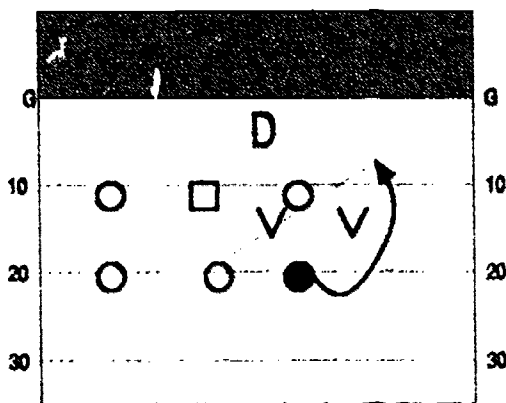
**Timing passes** - go 10 yards; turn in or turn out.



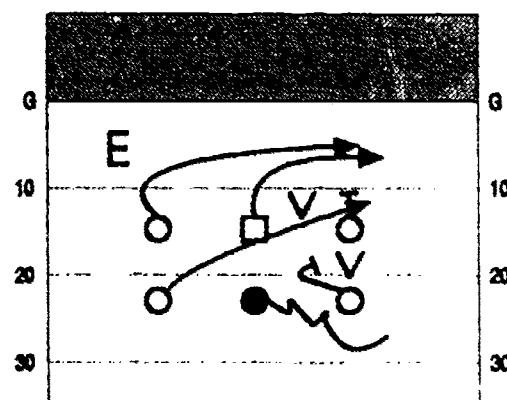
**Swing or flair pass** - give slight lead so HB runs to ball.



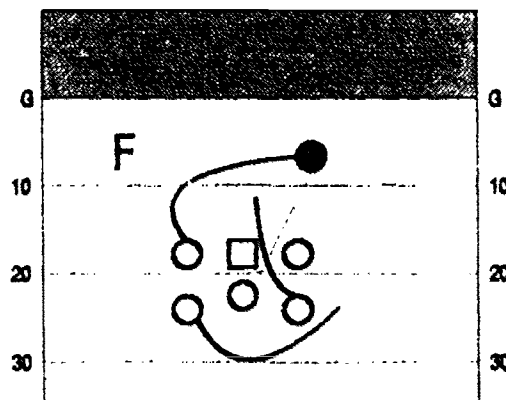
**Long passes** - receiver should run under the ball.



**Screen passes** - let defense slip through; quarterback lofts pass over defense to his/her receiver.

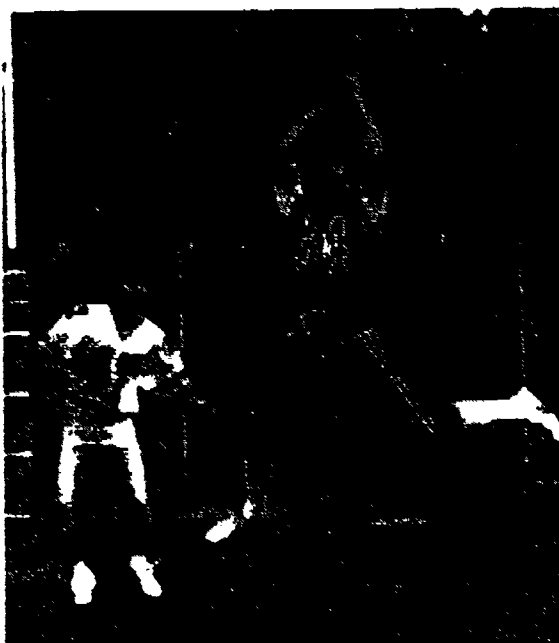


**Roll-out passes** - run pass option (DB is key) rush=pass; no rush=QB runs.



**Play action passes** - faking one of the running plays and then set to throw.





## B. PASS CATCHING FUNDAMENTALS

### OUTLINE

- Define pass receiver qualifications
- Techniques of catching the football
- Check list for pass receiving
- Check list for common errors in pass receiving
- Pass patterns
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression

### PASS RECEIVER QUALIFICATIONS

In flag football the name of the game is speed and quickness. Flagball is a finesse game and not so much a power or brute strength game as tackle football. The main ingredient of a successful pass receiver is **SPEED**. If he/she does not have this quality, he/she must work on timing, cuts, and patterns to make up for the lack of ability to just outrun a defender. The following is a list of the five qualities a pass receiver needs to play the game of flagball:

1. Speed.
2. Maneuverability - the ability to get open.
3. Good hands - the ability to catch the ball in any position.
4. Strong desire - must want the ball more than the defense even if contacted on the catch.
5. Height - the bigger the target, the easier it is to hit.

# TECHNIQUES OF CATCHING FOOTBALL



A. Line play. The player stance is upright so he/she can more easily read the defense. His/her feet should be shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent and upper body relaxed. Mentally the receiver needs to be thinking about the general type of defense that will be played. He/she thinks of what his/her player will be doing, what he/she has done before, and how the defense has reacted.

The release is important because if it is inside or outside it will disturb the timing of the quarterback. Types of releases would be fake block and blast, single head fake and fake step (inside fake go outside), or a double fake (fake inside, fake outside, go inside).

B. Catching the football. Some general principles to remember: Be soft all over (give with every catch). Absorb the ball; don't be stone hands. Look the ball into your hands. Do not take your eyes off the ball until you have sole possession of it. Catch the ball with your hands and not with your body. The hands can give with the catch whereas your body does not. The following catches are illustrated.



Pass thrown chest high - correct hand placement is with thumbs together.



Pass thrown below waist - correct hand placement is with thumbs out and small fingers together.



Never catch a ball aimed at your knees. The upswing and hardness of the knees will knock the ball away. Dive for it instead. Be sure to get your hands under, like a grass cutter. This will prevent a broken finger.



Over the shoulder catch - extend arms, palms up with little fingers touching. Close elbows to make a basket so the ball will not drop through. Don't extend arms till time of catch. Cushioning of catch will be caused by running away from ball.

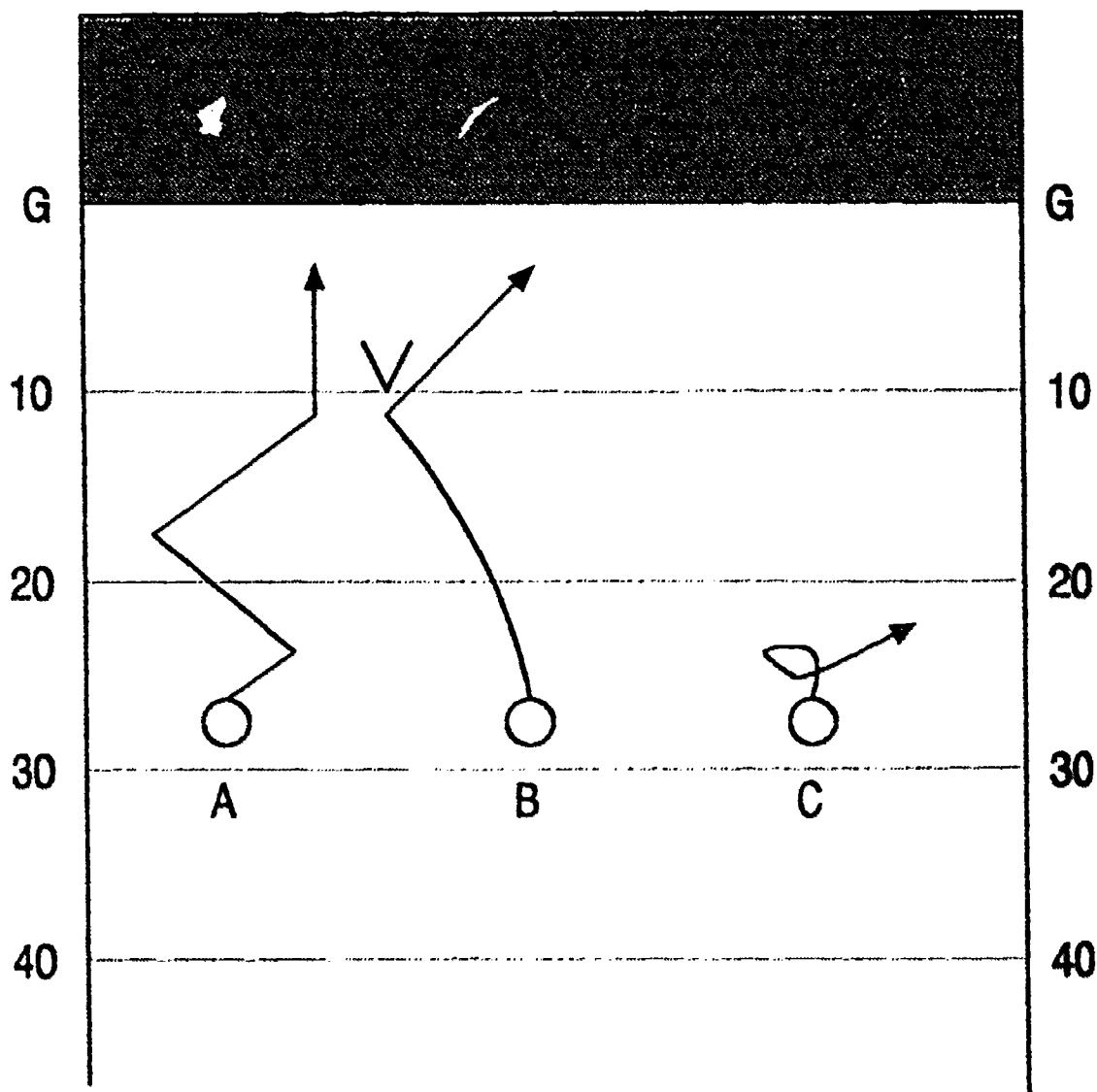


Pass thrown behind receiver - hand placement is the key. Hands spread wide and open to catch and cover ball. Be sure and run toward ball and catch it on some part of body, with your hands. Do not try and catch it in your hip pocket.

C. Getting open - the first priority is to drive off the defender. This can be done in a variety of ways. Change of speed is the most obvious, along with change of direction. The key is to make cuts sharp and believable. The receiver must make his/her route realistic to fake out the defender. The following are ways to get open:

1. Zig-zag run - get defender going the wrong way and cut. (Illustration A)

2. Run and out - run to defender's inside shoulder until s/he turns, then cross feet and break out. (Illustration B)
3. Two step - plant opposite direction crossover into other direction. (Illustration C)
4. Make sharp cuts and keep eyes on defender for better fakes.
5. Receiver must be under control when he/she makes his/her break. Then it is an all-out effort to get to the ball.





## CHECK LIST FOR PASS RECEIVING

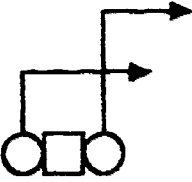
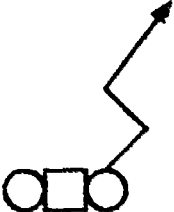

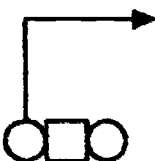
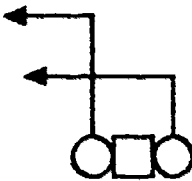
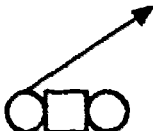
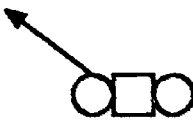
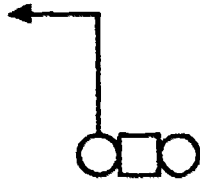
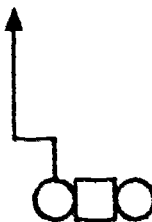

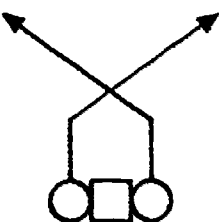
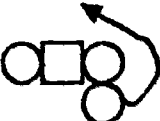
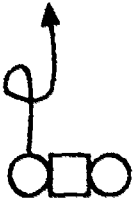
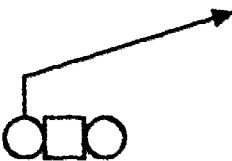



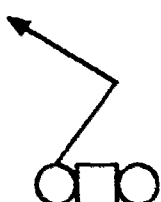

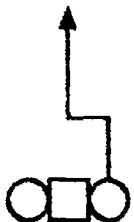
1. Take off - never be held up on the line of scrimmage. Always line up square and stand tall.
2. Approach - use straight line; 3/4 speed, fake defender back. Sell your fake and step in the opposite direction of your final break.
3. Faking - use head; change of direction, stop and go and maintain body control.
4. Run - under control and relaxed. Turn only head and neck.
5. Catching - relax completely as the ball comes to you. Look the ball into your hands. Catch ball with hands rather than trapping it next to your body. Remember correct hand placement in relation to where ball is thrown.
6. Be soft all over. Give with every catch.
7. Running - after the catch. Don't run with the ball until under control. Tuck ball away and protect it, then head up field toward the goal line.



## CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN PASS RECEIVING

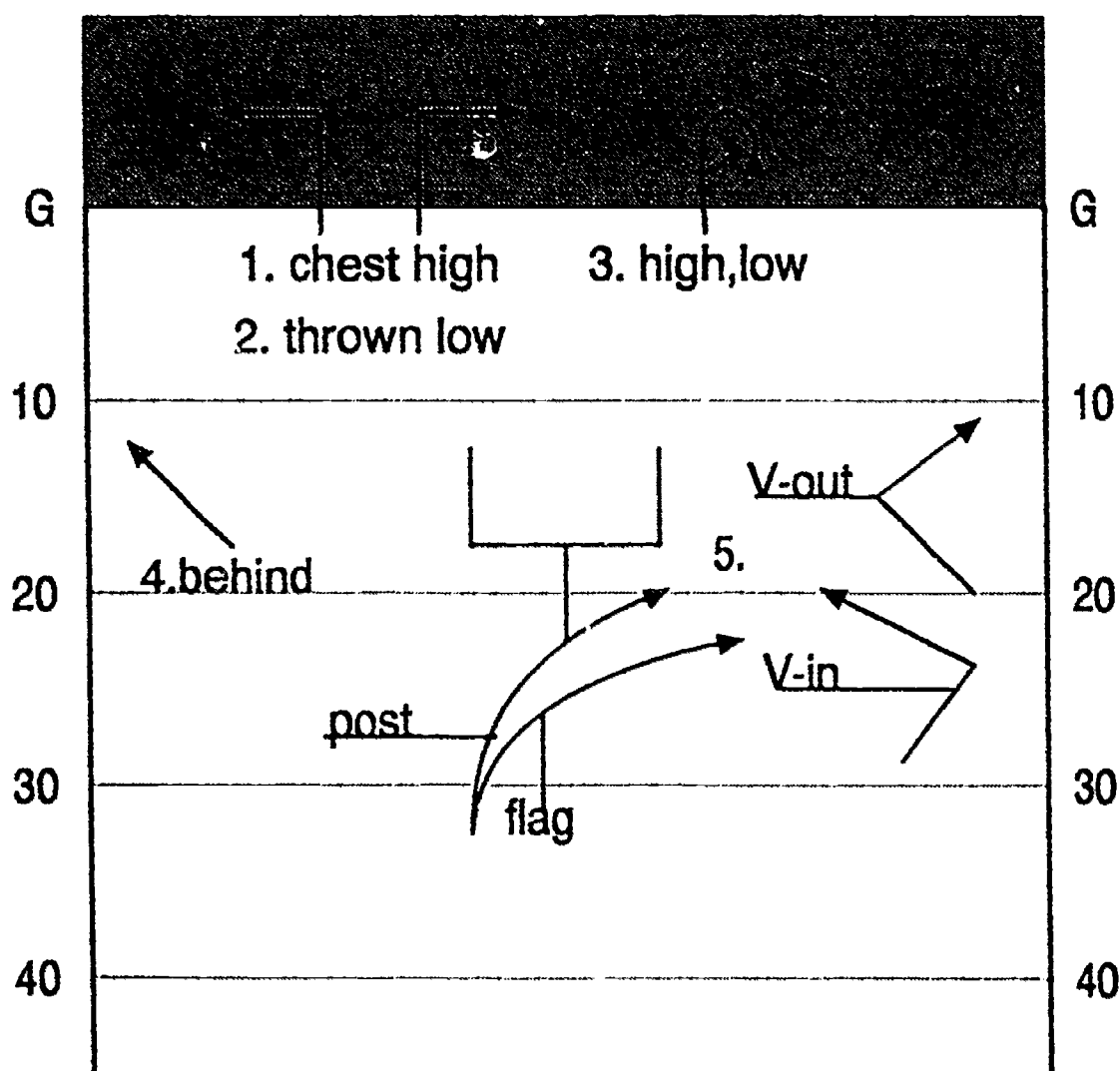
1. If pass receiver is fumbling ball, check his/her eyes watching ball into his hands. Check position of his/her hands at time of catch. Is the receiver soft all over or is he/she tensing up at the time of the catch? Check the runner's speed; he/she may not be under control.
2. If the receiver cannot seem to get open, check his/her speed. He/she may not be using eye deception and checking maneuvers of the receiver.
3. If the receiver has trouble evading the defender once he/she catches the pass, check the tucking away of the ball and the speed of the receiver.

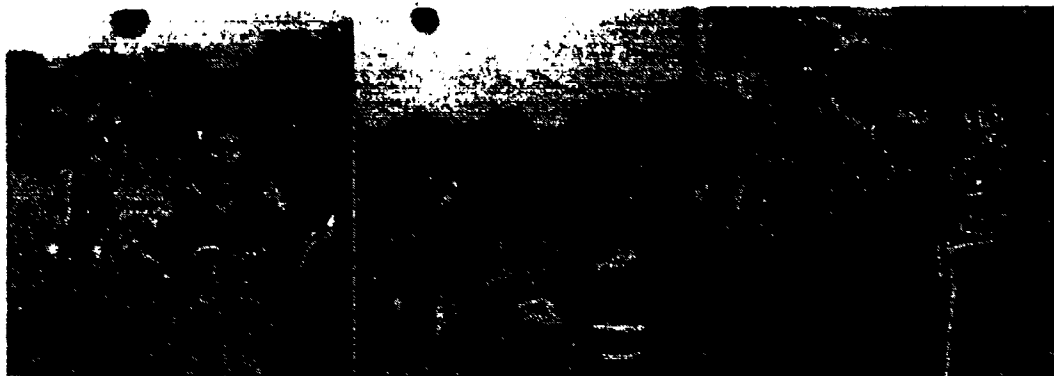
# PASS PATTERNS

 <p>END S RIGHT</p>	 <p>Z-OUT</p>	 <p>Z-IN</p>	 <p>SQUARE-IN</p>
 <p>END S LEFT</p>	 <p>SLANT-IN</p>	 <p>SLANT-OUT</p>	 <p>SQUARE-OUT</p>
 <p>CHAIR</p>	 <p>BUTTONHOOK</p>	 <p>CROSS</p>	 <p>FLAIR-HB</p>
 <p>HOOK-GO</p>	 <p>FLAG</p>	 <p>SIDELINE</p>	 <p>SWING-HB</p>
 <p>V-IN</p>	 <p>V-OUT</p>	 <p>POST</p>	 <p>STOP-GO</p>

## DRILLS

1. Square in or out with ball chest high.
2. Square in or out with ball thrown low.
3. Hook pass thrown high and low.
4. Slant patterns with the ball thrown behind the receiver.
5. Over the shoulder catch 10-15 yards - post, flag, V in, or V out.



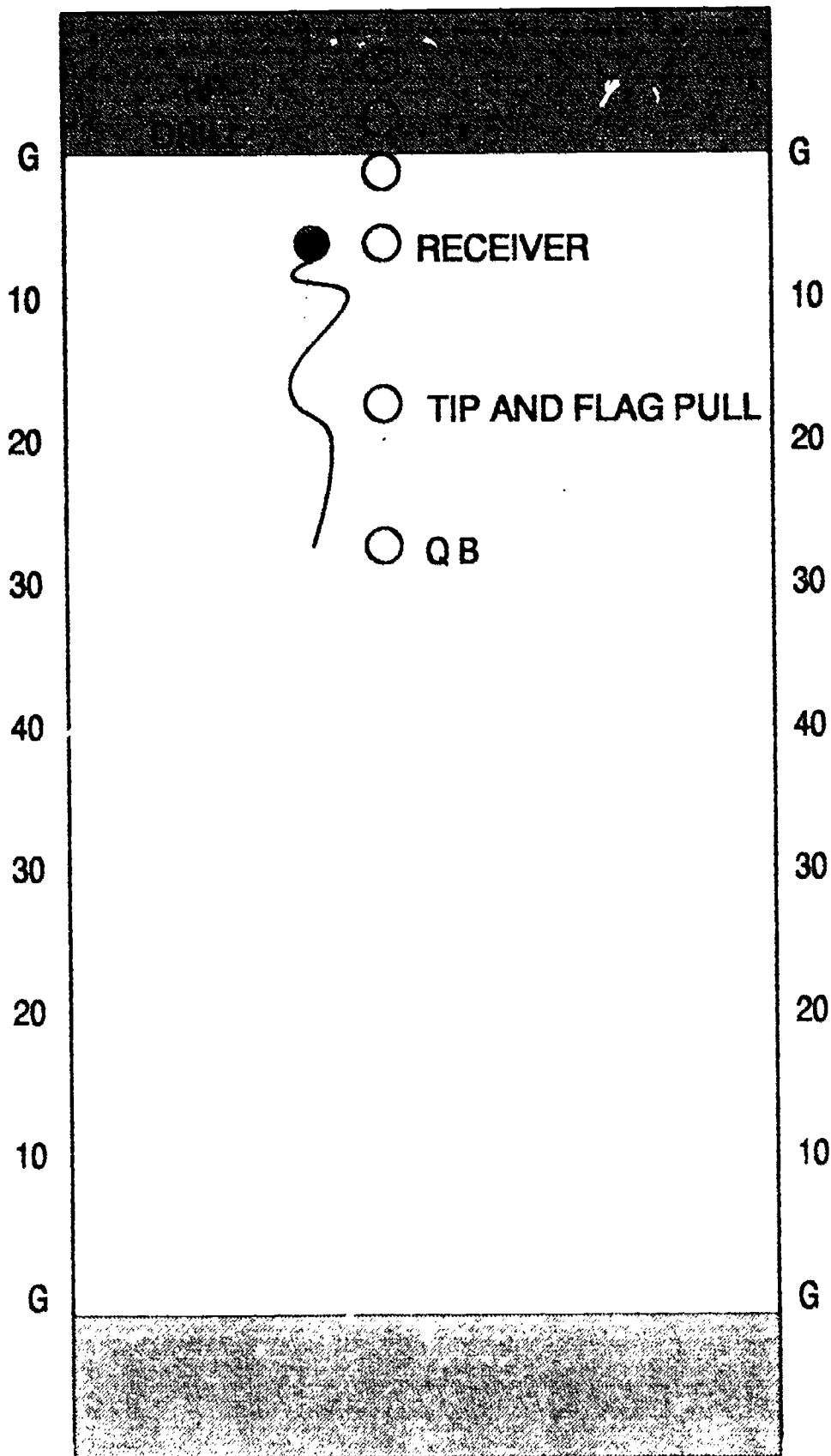


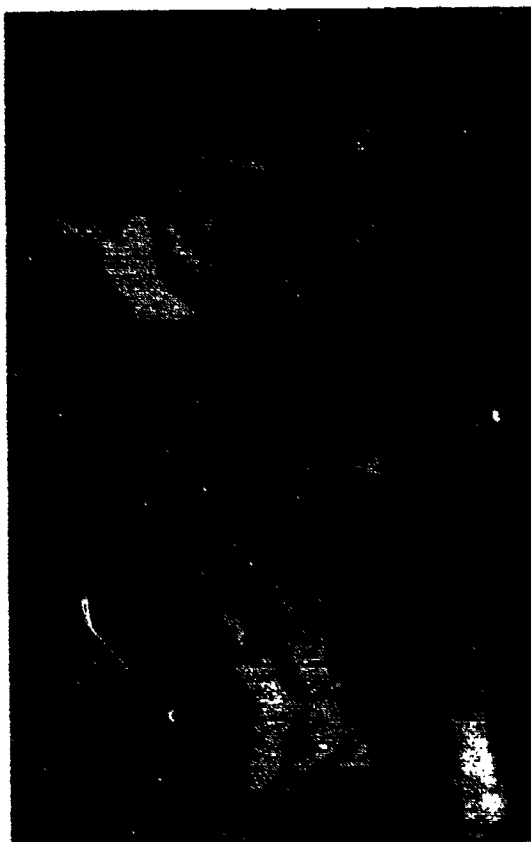
6. Turn around drill - have receivers line up 10-15 yds from the quarterback with their backs to him/her. The quarterback throws the ball; while it is in mid air he/she calls out "turn." At that moment the receiver must turn around, find the ball, make the reception and then sprint the ball back to the quarterback. The quarterback will vary his/her throw; some high, some low, some behind, etc. Also, the speed of the pass will increase as the skill of the receiver increases.



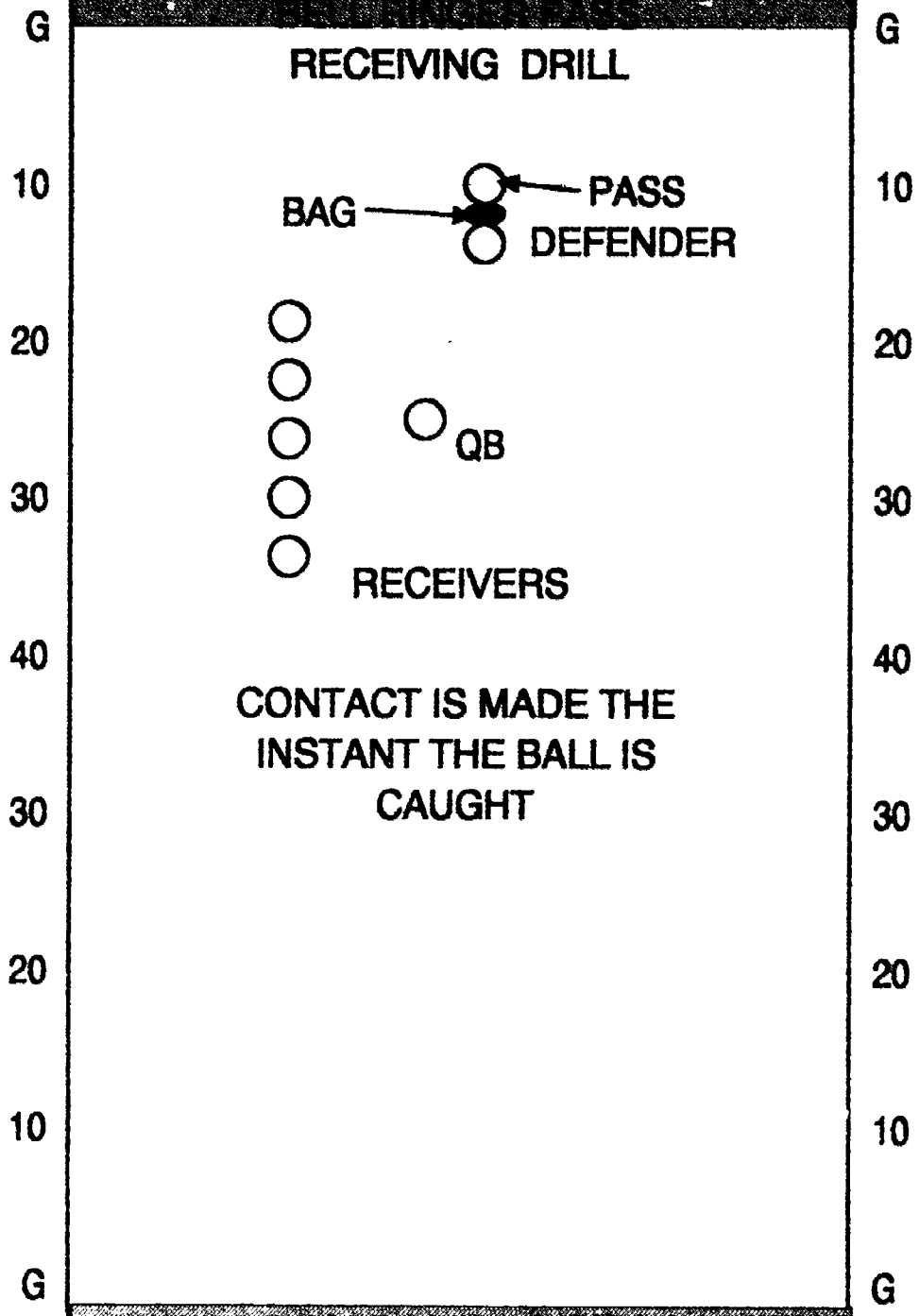
7. Tip drill - the quarterback throws the ball at a player who then tips the ball up in the air like a volleyball pass. The receiver must catch the ball before it hits the ground and run it back to the quarterback while avoiding the tipper pulling his/her flag.

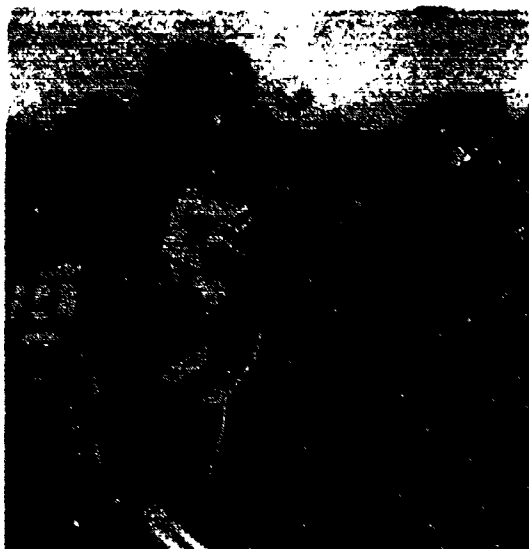






8. **Bell ringer** - The purpose of this drill is to help build the receiver's concentration. All catching fundamentals should be stressed, but concentration is the key. Receivers line up and can do simple square out patterns. They run to where the defender is holding the blocking bag. This helps put the receiver and defender in close proximity. The quarterback throws the pass and the defensive back times the hit with the bag to make contact with the receiver at the moment he/she catches the ball. The defensive man's job is not to hurt the receiver, but to try and knock the ball loose. The receiver must look the ball into his/her hands, be soft, and protect the ball. After the catch and contact are made, the receiver turns upfield. He/she then jogs ball back to quarterback. Rotate defender about every 5 to 7 passes.





9. Coming back to help the quarterback - have receivers run pattern and then run back to help the quarterback under pressure with no open receivers. Run this first with no defense; then with the two defenders on one receiver.



### CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION

1. List and emphasize qualifications of a good pass receiver.
2. Teach proper way to line up on the line and how to get free off the line of scrimmage.
3. Work all athletes on catching the ball:
  - a) soft hands.
  - b) looking the ball into the hands.
  - c) vary catches high, low, behind, overhead, etc.
4. Teach the fundamentals of running pass patterns, change of speed, direction, and fakes. Emphasis on clear, sharp cuts and reading the quarterback and defender to get open.
5. Protecting the ball and turning upfield.



## **C. BLOCKING FUNDAMENTALS**

### **OUTLINE**

- Define the need for proper execution
- Pass block
- Open hole block
- Brush block/screen block
- Trap block
- Cross block
- Combination block
- Hook block
- Screen blocking NIRSA
- Check list for proper blocking techniques
- Check list for common errors in blocking techniques
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression

### **PROPER EXECUTION**

Blocking in the game of flagball is the key to pass protection and the running game. In tackle, ball running opens up the pass, whereas in flagball, passing opens up the run. But, even with this element of surprise, proper blocking to execute the desired plays is required.

Blocking in flagball is safe and effective if done properly. The force which is applied is an important consideration. How hard do you hit another player? To answer that question I have a couple of quotes: "Whenever the game becomes more important than the players, it is wrong" and "You only need to move the player out of the way so the play will run correctly." When blocking becomes more than this, that is when it endangers the players and causes ill will in the game. As a player or as a coach, this consideration must be thought through. This author feels that if the above philosophy is applied, blocking can be a safe and enjoyable part of the game of flagball.



## **PASS BLOCK**

The feet should be shoulder width apart and weight evenly distributed. Knees are bent with tail down for balance and a low center of gravity. Remember, you are never low enough unless you are lower than your opponent. In flagball arms should extend with the hands grasping the jersey. The player's arms are to be in contact with the body. But many coaches feel that if the hands are grasping the jersey, that is contact enough. This point will be left up to the individual coach and his/her preferences. Hands or forearm cannot travel faster than the speed of the body or it is an illegal block (SARC Rules - 6 man). The reason for keeping the arms extended is to control the opponent while blocking him/her.

This will be the basic blocking stance used in most of the blocks described. In the pass block the player comes to you. Your job is to stay between the defensive player and the quarterback. Stay low, hit and retreat, hit and retreat. Once again, stay low. Keep your hands in contact with your body or jersey yet keeping arms out for control of your opponent.

## OPEN THE HOLE BLOCK



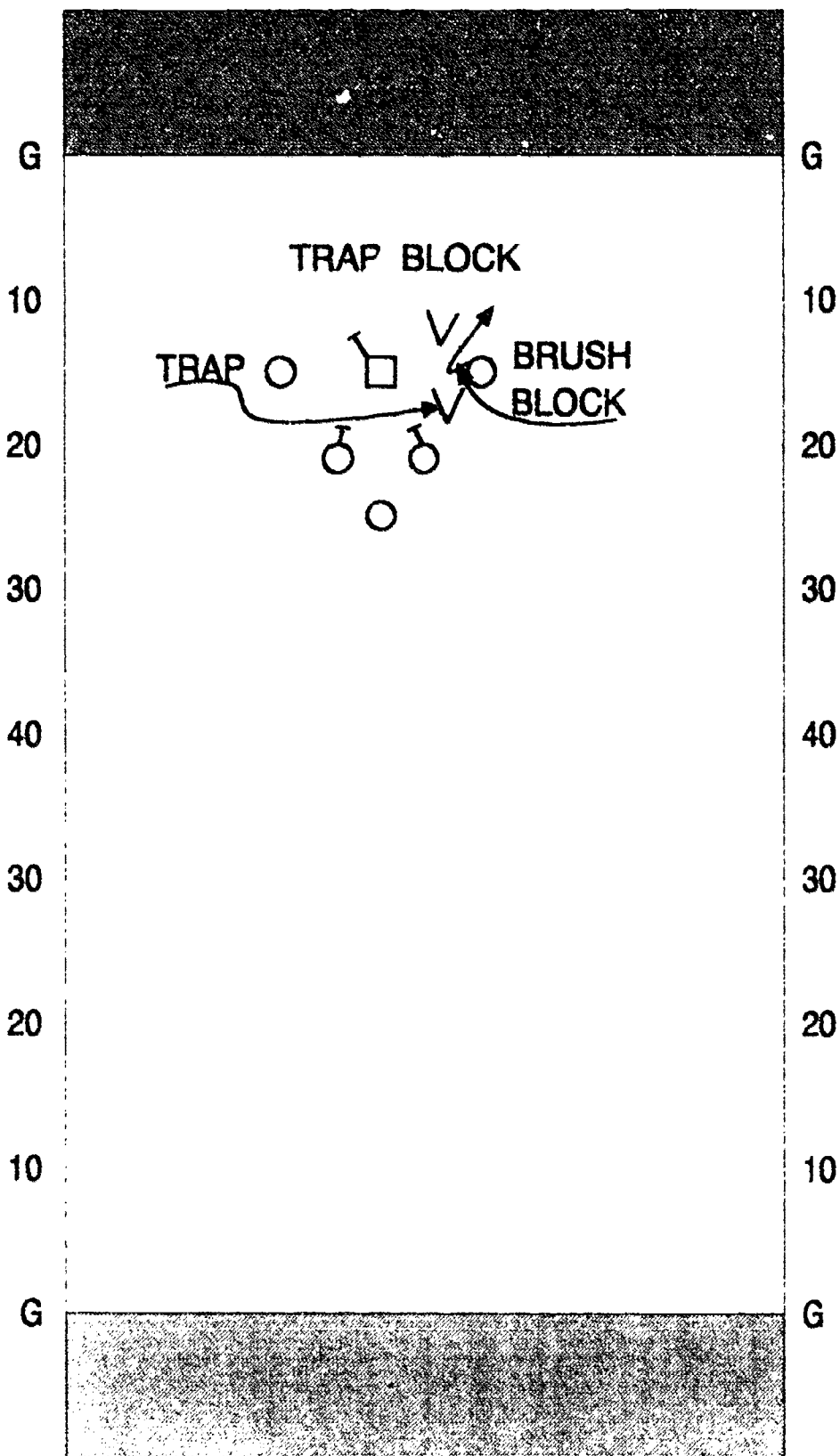
Take the above blocking stance with the low center of gravity. You are now in position to block. The block is used to open a hole in the line for a halfback or runner to go through. The blocker's job is to move the defensive player out of the way so the play can run. Hit and stick is the terminology used on this block. Don't try and knock your opponent over; just make contact as low as you legally can and drive the legs. The legs are what move the man, not the pushing of the arms. Remember to keep your eyes on the defender to make contact. Keep that contact throughout the block. The legs are the key to moving the defender.

## BRUSH BLOCK/SCREEN BLOCK

The brush block and the screen block are basically a straight shoulder block. The purpose of the blocker is to momentarily delay the forward movement of the defensive man. The block consists of a shoulder block contact with almost immediate release. The defensive man/woman is contacted with the initial impact of the shoulder charge and then let go. This block frequently is used by ends before going out on pass patterns and also by halfbacks in similar situations.

## TRAP BLOCK

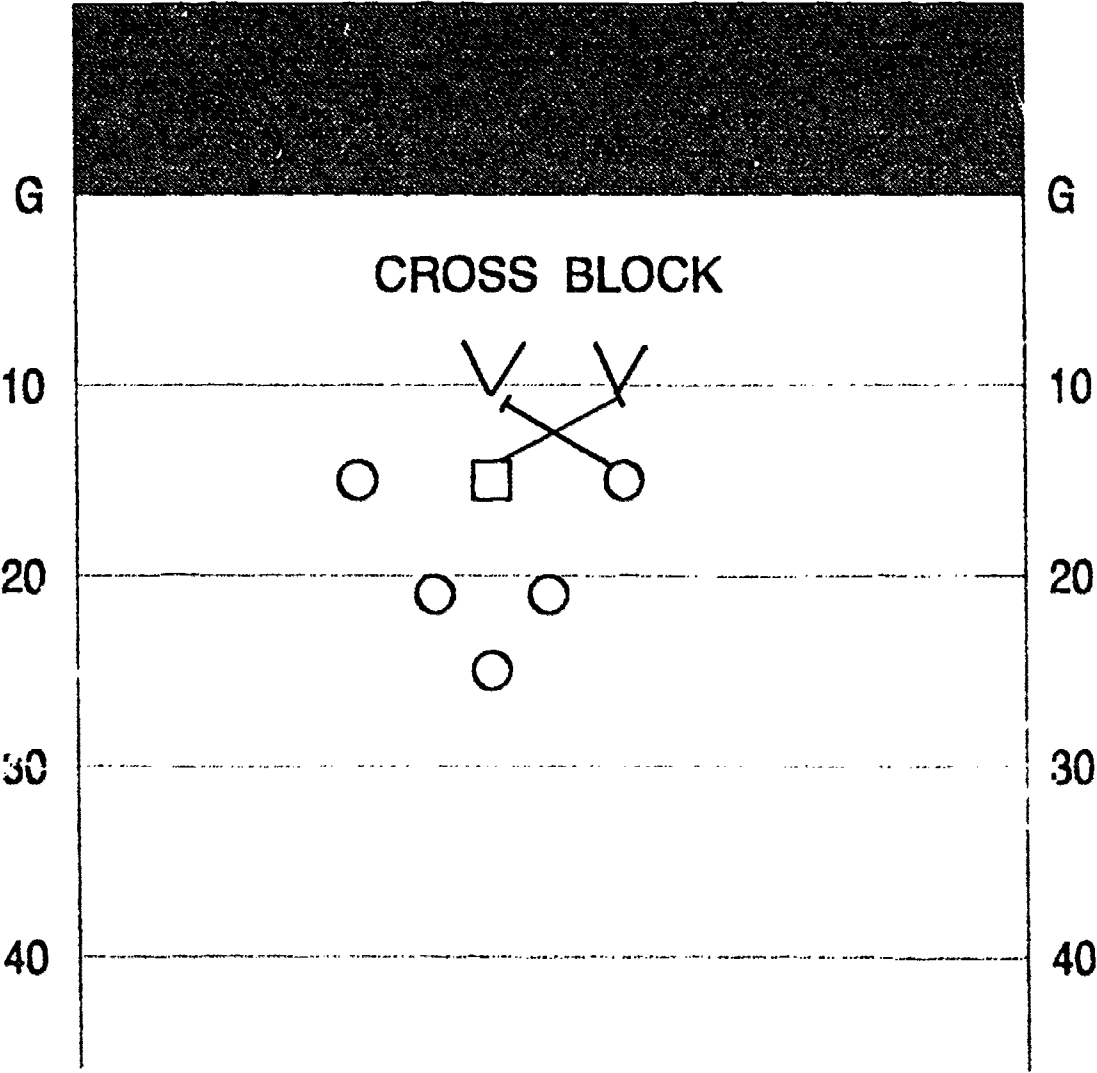
The reasons for the use of the trap block are surprise and/or size mismatch. This block is usually executed by the off-side end trapping the on-side end's pass rusher. The on-side end brush blocks the pass rush allowing the defensive man/woman through the line of scrimmage. At the same time the off-side end takes a step backward. He/she fires across the field, behind the line of scrimmage, blocking the ensuing pass rusher from the side (many times the blind side). The purpose here is not to do injury, but to surprise and execute the block correctly.





# CROSS BLOCK

There are several reasons for the use of the cross block. One is the element of surprise, another is defensive alignment, and, last, a size mismatch in the line of scrimmage. Blocking form and execution are the same as the open the hole block, except for the timing between the center and the end. The center always goes first. He/she snaps the ball and should be the first off the ball. His/her step should be with the foot in the direction in which he/she is moving. The end explodes off the line stepping with the same foot as the direction he/she is moving. He/she is right on the tail of the center. This is a bang bang play and timing is the key with explosive power. This cross block can be used very effectively in the offensive backfield by the halfbacks.



## COMBINATION BLOCK



The reason for the combo block is the opportunity to team block one of the defense's stronger players. The blocking fundamentals and stance are consistent with what has been explained. The key to this block is the two offensive players working together in one accord to either open a hole or pass block the opponent.

## HOOK BLOCK



The hook block is used primarily to execute a power end sweep. The blocker, usually the offensive end, is to seal off the end so the halfback can run around the end untouched. The offensive player must hit his/her player low and keep the point of contact the side to which the sweep is to be run (sweep right contact defense on right side of midsection.) Once contact is made the offensive end should step with his/her outside foot and in doing so swing his/her tail around to hold the rusher. The offensive blocker uses his/her tail as if it were a camera and he/she was taking a picture of the running back as he/she is running around the end. All the basic fundamentals of stance, hitting low, and point of contact are consistent in executing this block.

## **SCREEN BLOCKING (NIRSA)**

Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body. The job of the offensive player is to put himself/herself between the player with the ball and the defensive player causing the defensive player to go around him/her to get the ball carrier.

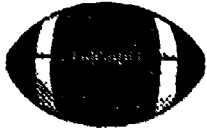
The screen block must take place without any contact. The arms of the screen blocker must be kept to the side or behind the back. No use of arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact is permitted. Only use of arms or hands allowed is to break a fall. The screen block should be set up 1 to 2 steps from the opponent giving him/her an opportunity to stop or avoid contact.

Blocking by interlocking, grasping, or encircling one another in any manner is illegal. The defensive player must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used except to break a fall or retain his/her balance.



### **CHECK LIST FOR PROPER BLOCKING TECHNIQUES**

1. Feet shoulder width apart.
2. Knees slightly bent.
3. Arms out front - grab jersey and control defensive player.
4. Contact opponent low to make block effective.
5. Pass block, hit, and retreat. Remember to wait for defense to come to you.
6. Offensive blocks hit and stick - move defensive man/woman out of path of the play.
7. Strength in blocking is low center of gravity and leg power to make the defensive man/woman move.

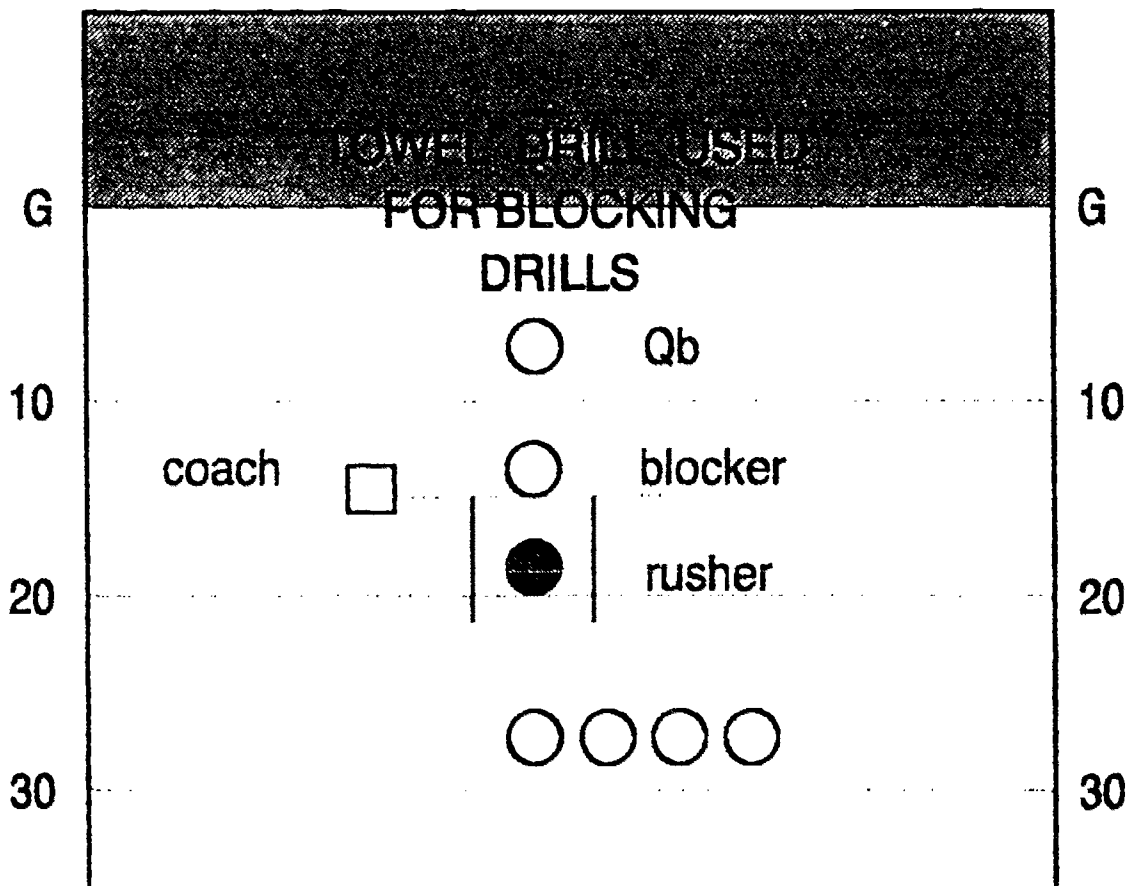


## CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN BLOCKING TECHNIQUES

1. Does not keep contact with opponent - check movement of feet; probably not moving them. You are only as good as your feet. Point of contact may be too high or not keeping eye on defensive player and losing the contact.
2. Does not make solid contact with opponent - check his/her eye contact, his/her leg power (hit and stick) and line stance. Is his/her center of gravity low enough?

## DRILLS

NOTE: In all blocking drills use the blocking pads for safety and ease for players. After learning the correct technique you may run the drills live with no pads.





1. **PASS BLOCK - TOWEL DRILL.** Set up boundaries for blocker and rusher with a quarterback to protect. Two people will be blocking at the same time to protect the quarterback. The coach will call out the signals and say "down set, hut one, hut two" and the drill proceeds until the coach blows the whistle.

**POINTS OF EMPHASIS:**

- a. Feet shoulder width apart, low center of gravity.
- b. Arm position out in front and wide to control defensive man/woman.
- c. Make contact at low belt level or lower. Move as low as the runner coming toward you.
- d. Let the rusher come to you; hit and retreat, hit and retreat.
- e. Stay between the defensive rusher and the passer.

2. **OPEN THE HOLE BLOCK.** Set up the same way as the towel drill, except there is no quarterback. The coach calls out the signals and has the players move their men/women out of the hole where the play will be run.

There is a teaching progression to this drill:

- a. have the blocker on down start pumping his/her legs (leg action is what moves the defensive man/woman). He/she continues pumping his/her legs through the call of "set."
- b. on the number he/she explodes out to make contact and move his/her player. The drill starts out simple with the blocker only moving his/her player straight back and then progresses to blocking him/her to the right or the left depending on the play.
- c. finally, the blocker does not move his/her feet at all, but must perform a legal block.

To teach this block and have players understand about getting low, the next drill is added.

3. **HIT AND CARRY DRILL.** The offensive player makes contact on the defensive player low enough to pick him/her up over the shoulder and carry him/her for 15 yards. This emphasizes the point of getting low.



## POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR ALL AGGRESSIVE BLOCKS:

- a. Feet shoulder width apart, with a low center of gravity.
  - b. Arms must be kept wide to control the defensive man/woman.
  - c. Make contact low to effectively move your man/woman.
  - d. Know the play and where the hole needs to be. You are the aggressor and must go out and initiate the contact. **Don't let the player come to you. YOU MUST GO GET THE DEFENSIVE PLAYER.**
  - e. Take the easiest route. The halfback will cut off your block, but, above all, clear the hole.
4. The trap, the cross, the combo, the hook, and the brush blocks use the same format explained above but with the emphasis on the particular uniqueness of the block.

**NOTE: MAKE EACH BLOCKING DRILL AS GAME-LIKE AS POSSIBLE**

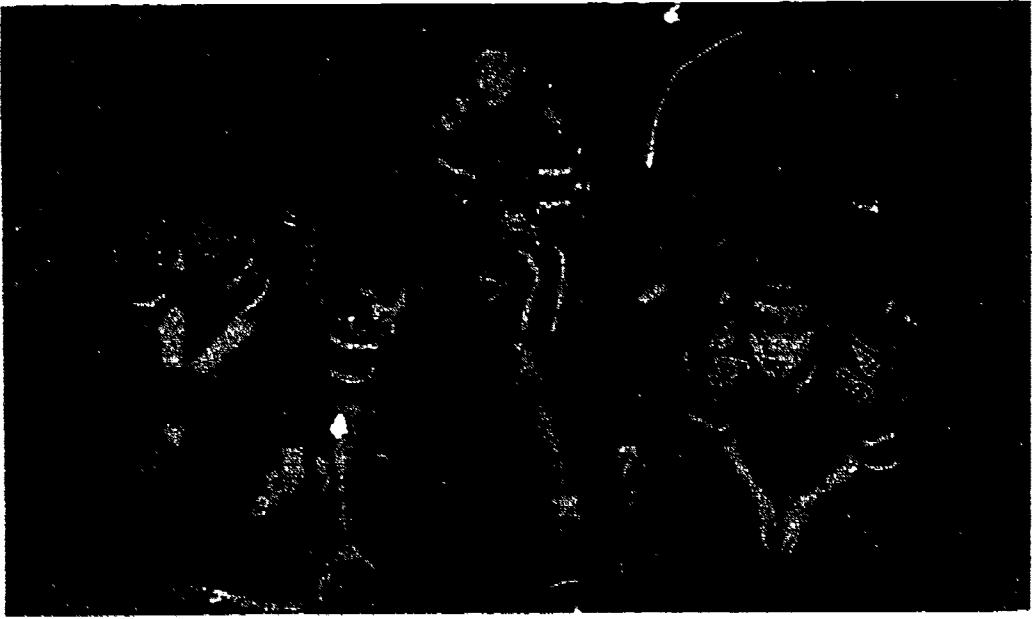
Teaching progression:

- a. Walk through
- b. Run through with pads
- c. Run through moving feet
- d. Run through with quarterback and running backs
- e. Run through with no pads, with quarterback and running backs



## CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION

1. Explain the need for proper fundamentals and execution.
2. Start with fundamentals:
  - a) stance, feet, and knees.
  - b) center of gravity.
  - c) arm placement, eye contact.
3. Teach pass block first.
4. Teach open the hole block with all the above fundamentals. Emphasize leg movement and going out to block opponent.
5. Teach all other blocks (brush, trap, cross, hook, etc.).
6. Teaching progression for blocks:
  - a) walk through.
  - b) run through with pads.
  - c) run through moving fast.
  - d) run through with quarterback and half backs.
  - e) run through with no pads; game-like situation.



## **D. BALL EXCHANGE FUNDAMENTALS**

### **OUTLINE**

- Define center qualifications
- Techniques of playing the center position
- Check list for centering the ball
- Check list for common centering errors
- Drills
- Define halfback qualifications
- Hand-off
- Pitch and carrying the ball
- Check list for proper ball exchanges
- Check list for common errors in ball exchanges
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression

### **CENTER QUALIFICATIONS**

The center must be good size and the best blocker on the team. In flagball he/she must be fast and a good receiver. He/she is the key to the offense. The center should hit quickly and effectively. He/she must be able to neutralize the defensive charge and retreat, always keeping the opposition in front of him/her in a pass protection block. The center must have balance and quick reaction. Most importantly he/she must



be able to snap the ball (hard and fast) and quickly react to his/her blocking assignment. The center also must be a leader because, as discussed later in Chapter 3, he/she calls all the blocking assignments on the front line.

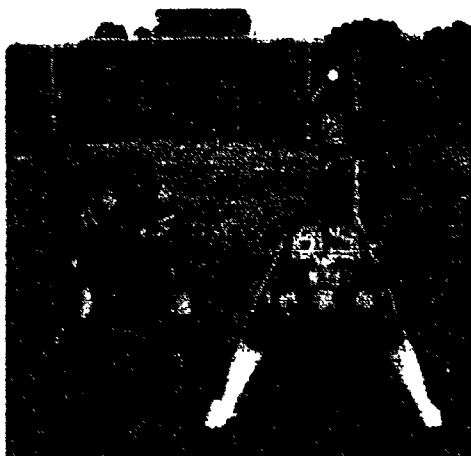
## TECHNIQUES OF PLAYING THE CENTER POSITION

Whether playing a tight formation or spread, the stance remains practically the same. The foot spread may widen a bit with the left foot slightly forward. If your team is in the T or I formation, grasp the ball with the right hand far enough toward the front of the ball so that the thumb comes across the top and fingertips across the far axis, with the laces in palm. Keep the left hand along the front or top of the ball for balance only.

The center's eyes are up in this stance, looking straight ahead and weight is kept forward. On the starting number, snap the ball into the quarterback's hand with one swift motion turning the ball counter-clockwise so the thread placement will be in the correct position for him/her to throw. Take a quick step forward while snapping the ball to be ready to play.



In the punt, spread, or shot gun formations grip the ball with right hand as for a forward pass. Place the right hand on the forward point of the ball with either the thumb or the fingers gripping the laces. Place the guiding hand (left) along the top of the ball, with the fingers running almost parallel to the length. With the fingertips of this hand apply just enough pressure to steady the ball. Unlike the tight formation, weight is over the balls of the feet and head is down, looking through your legs at the receiving back's lower leg. Spiral the ball back (as in forward pass) with a good wrist snap, letting the hands follow through between the legs. If the back is going to run either left or right, snap the ball with a little lead, enabling the back to catch it while in stride. On a direct hike float the ball to a spot directly in front of the back, low enough to enable him/her to catch it without straightening up.



### **CHECK LIST FOR CENTERING THE BALL**

#### **FOR TIGHT FORMATIONS:**

1. Wide stance with left foot forward.
2. Grip, eyes up, swift snapping action with the diagonal turn of the ball.
3. Take a quick step forward during snapping action.

#### **FOR PUNT OR WIDE OPEN FORMATIONS:**

1. Right foot stance must be forward if right handed. Needs to snap off back foot to help with follow-through so no contact is made with right leg.
2. Weight is on balls of feet. Eye looking back at receiver.
3. Spiral pass with a good wrist snap.



### **CHECK LIST FOR COMMON CENTERING ERRORS**

1. Stance and foot placement need to be checked for different formations.
2. Grip needs to be checked if not a nice spiral ball.
3. If distance not there--check the follow-through (right leg) and the wrist snap.

## DRILLS

1. Center quarterback exchange from a tight formation.
2. Center quarterback exchange from a punt formation or spread formation.
3. Center back exchange hitting the man/women in motion.
4. Center back exchange hitting the halfback option.
5. Do all the above, first with no blocking and then add blocking into the snap and the center calling the blocking assignments.

## DEFINE HALFBACK QUALIFICATIONS.

The halfback needs to be one of the fastest and quickest players on the team. He/she must be able to give realistic fakes and good blocks. The halfback with the ability to throw would be a very needed talent for flagball.

### THE HALFBACK MUST BE ABLE TO RUN, BLOCK, THROW, AND CATCH



**THE THREE POINT STANCE** - A house is no better than the foundation upon which it is built. This statement holds just as true for flagball players. There are four basic components to the stance:

1) feet should be shoulder width apart and staggered with the weight on the balls of the feet.

2) arms and hands position for the right handed player should form the apex of the tripod position. The arm should be straight and in line with the right foot and knee. The right hand should contact the ground perpendicular to the line of scrimmage and directly under the right shoulder.

3) plane of the hips, back, shoulder, and head should all be level. This is the most efficient for blocking or backfield play.

4) weight should be divided between the extended arm and the feet of the halfback.



**THE HAND-OFF** - The halfback starts straight forward as fast as possible and continues straight ahead until he/she feels the ball placed in his/her stomach. He/she does not look down. It is the job of the quarterback to place the ball in the proper position. The halfback's inside elbow is always up to receive the ball.

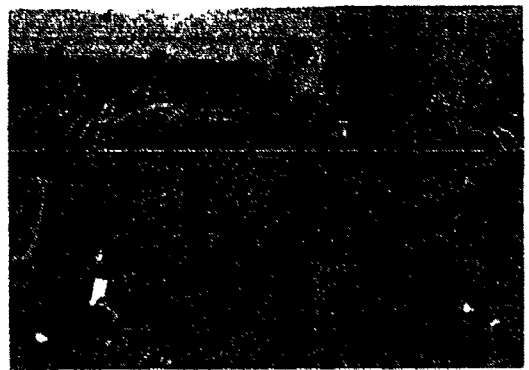


The halfback's free arm is down at his/her side. When the ball is placed into his/her possession, he/she then wraps both arms around the ball holding the tip of each end of the ball in each hand as shown.

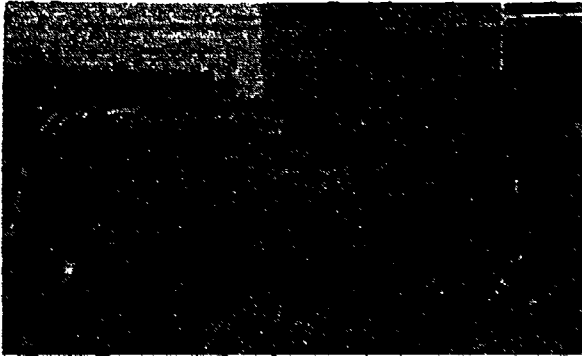
**THE PITCH AND CARRYING THE BALL** - The two hand push pass is the technique used on all pitch plays. It is the most efficient, fast, and accurate way to get the ball out to the halfback. To receive the pitch the halfback must be soft all over and look the ball into his/her hands (can't run with the ball until it is caught). Make sure hand placement is so both hands are wide open with thumbs together to catch the ball. Wrap up and cover the ball for protection and head upfield. In flagball the players are to go for the flag and not the ball, but make sure the ball is not accidentally knocked out of hands.



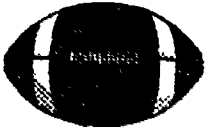
The proper hand placement on the pitch.



The pitch in the air.

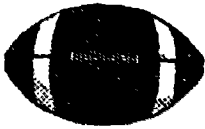


Halfback reception  
of the pitch.



### CHECK LIST FOR PROPER BALL EXCHANGES

1. Be soft all over.
2. Look the ball into your hands.
3. Make sure you have caught the ball before running.
4. Hand and arm placement correct.
5. Protect the ball upon reception.



### CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN BALL EXCHANGES

1. Faulty communication between the quarterback and the halfback.
2. Ball dropped - check arm and hand placement of quarterback and halfback. Check if each athlete is watching the ball all the way.

## DRILLS

1. HAND-OFF DRILL  
Two lines of players handing the ball off to each other in succession. Concentrate on all the fundamentals.
2. Practice between the quarterback and the halfbacks in handoffs and pitches.
3. Make these drills as game-like as possible:
  - a) Use a full team for the drill.
  - b) Block, run, and play as a real game—the real test.



## **CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION**

1. Go over center qualifications with athletes.
2. Teach basic stance, grip, eyes, and snap.
3. When teaching the snap, work on tight formation.  
First the spread and punting, then snapping to a player  
in motion.
4. Explain the qualifications for an offensive halfback.
5. Teach basic stance. Review receiving hand off, pitch, and pass.
6. Review blocking techniques pass and open the hole.
7. Explain procedure for protecting the ball and after  
reception by halfback (following blocks, etc.).

# CHAPTER 3

## OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS AND PLAY SELECTION



### OUTLINE

- Developing the qualities of a good offense
- The offensive numbering system
- Blocking assignments and how they are called
- The huddle
- Shifts
- Calling audibles
- 2 minute drill or hurry up offense
- Run and shoot offense
- Check list for team offense
- Check list for common errors in offensive play
- Passing zones
- Offensive formations and plays
- Check list for learning progression



## DEVELOPING A GOOD OFFENSE

First, the offense must be built on the talent available. Look at the following factors: speed, size, experience, and flagball savvy. If size is abundant, then a running game can be used. Yes, you can run the ball in flagball. It does not have to be primarily a passing game. If speed is an advantage, then a spread-type offense with a lot of passing will be effective. In tackle football running sets up the pass; in flagball it is just the other way around. Passing sets up the run.

When putting together plays and play repertoire, a good series is most important. Half the effectiveness of the play is calling the right play at the right time. A good series should include the following: a) a quick hitter that threatens the middle of the field, b) a pass on either side of the line, c) a reverse, and then d) an option play by the quarterback.

A quick hitter depends on quickness and surprise attack. If a quick hitter is not available, forget the split-T formation. Quick hitters will fake inside and go outside or fake outside and go inside. The philosophy is to mix up formations and play selection. Keep the defense guessing.

Take advantage of what the defense gives. If they play a zone defense, then flood the zone and send 3 receivers into single or double zone coverage. Also, if zone defense is used, clear a zone and delay a receiver back under where the previous end cleared. If player-to-player defense is used, call crosses which work like the screen in basketball and will free the receiver. The point to remember is to manipulate the offense so that whatever play the defense calls is ineffective. Then, the appropriate play can be called for the situation.

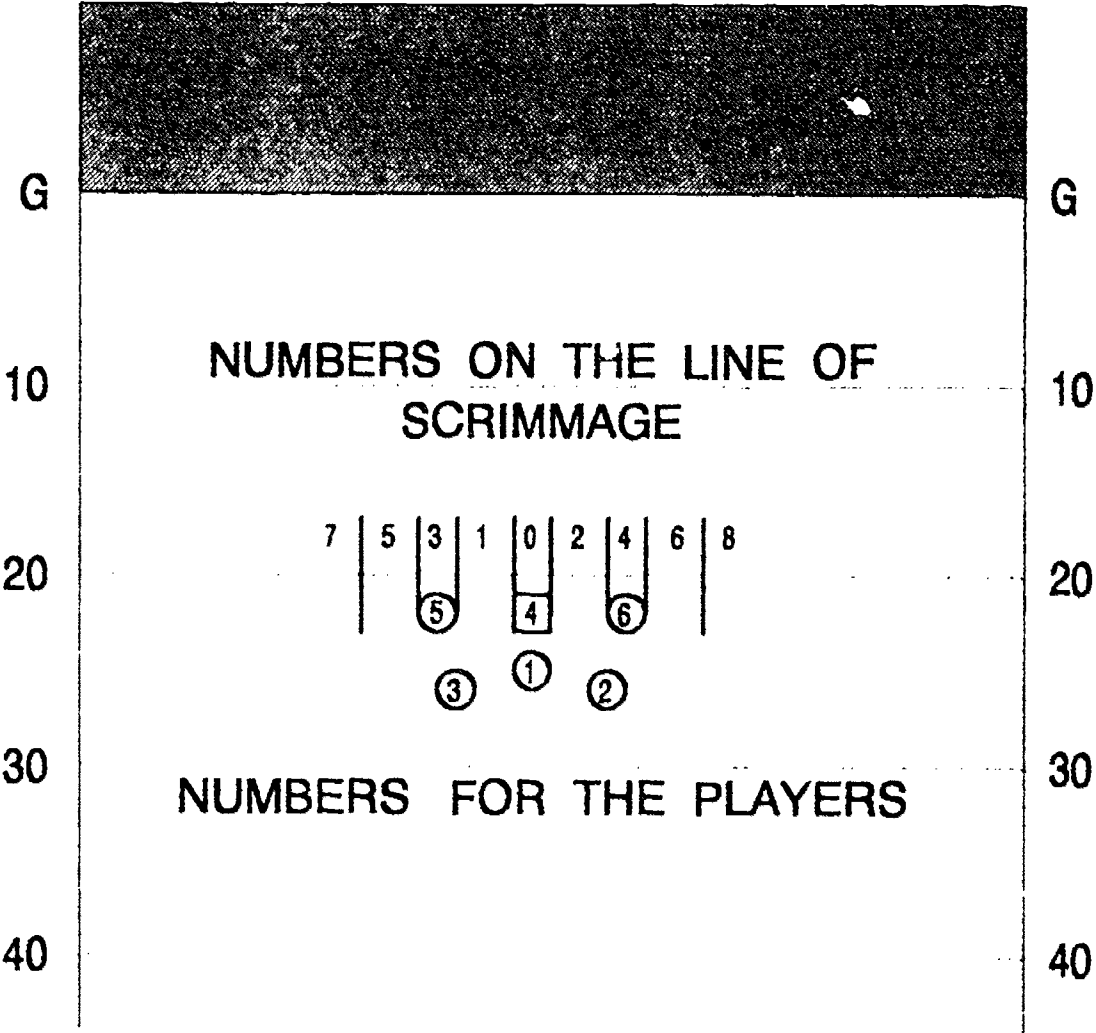
## THE OFFENSIVE NUMBERING SYSTEM

The numbering system in flagball is very similar to that of tackle football. The big difference is that in tackle ball there are a lot more players and holes in the line. In flagball each player is given a number and each position or 3-yard gap on the line of scrimmage is given a number. An easy way to remember this is that numbers on the right are even and the ones on the left are odd. Offensive players use the numbers 1 through 6. The quarterback is 1, the right halfback is 2, the left halfback is 3, the center is 4, the left end is 5, and the right end is 6. On the line of scrimmage all the holes in the line are numbered and they are consistent with the numbers of the players. The right side of the center is even and the left side of the center is odd. Looking at the line of scrimmage, start with the position of center in the middle of line. He/she is 0. The first 3 yards to the right is 2; the first 3 yards to the left is 1. The right side holes are numbered 2, 4, 6, 8. The left side holes are 1, 3, 5, 7. The diagram illustrates the numbers of the players and the holes in the line.

The purpose in using a numbering system to call plays is to make it easier for the quarterback to designate the play and let each player know his/her responsibility. The quarterback calls the number of the



player first and the number of the hole in the line second. An example would be a 35 sweep on 2, break. On this play, the number 3 player or left halfback will sweep around the left end at hole 5 on the odd side. The halfback knows the position where he/she is to cross the line of scrimmage. The players on the line know where to block and the other offensive players know where to execute downfield blocking because they know the path of the play. Using this system simplifies the communication between the quarterback and the offensive team.



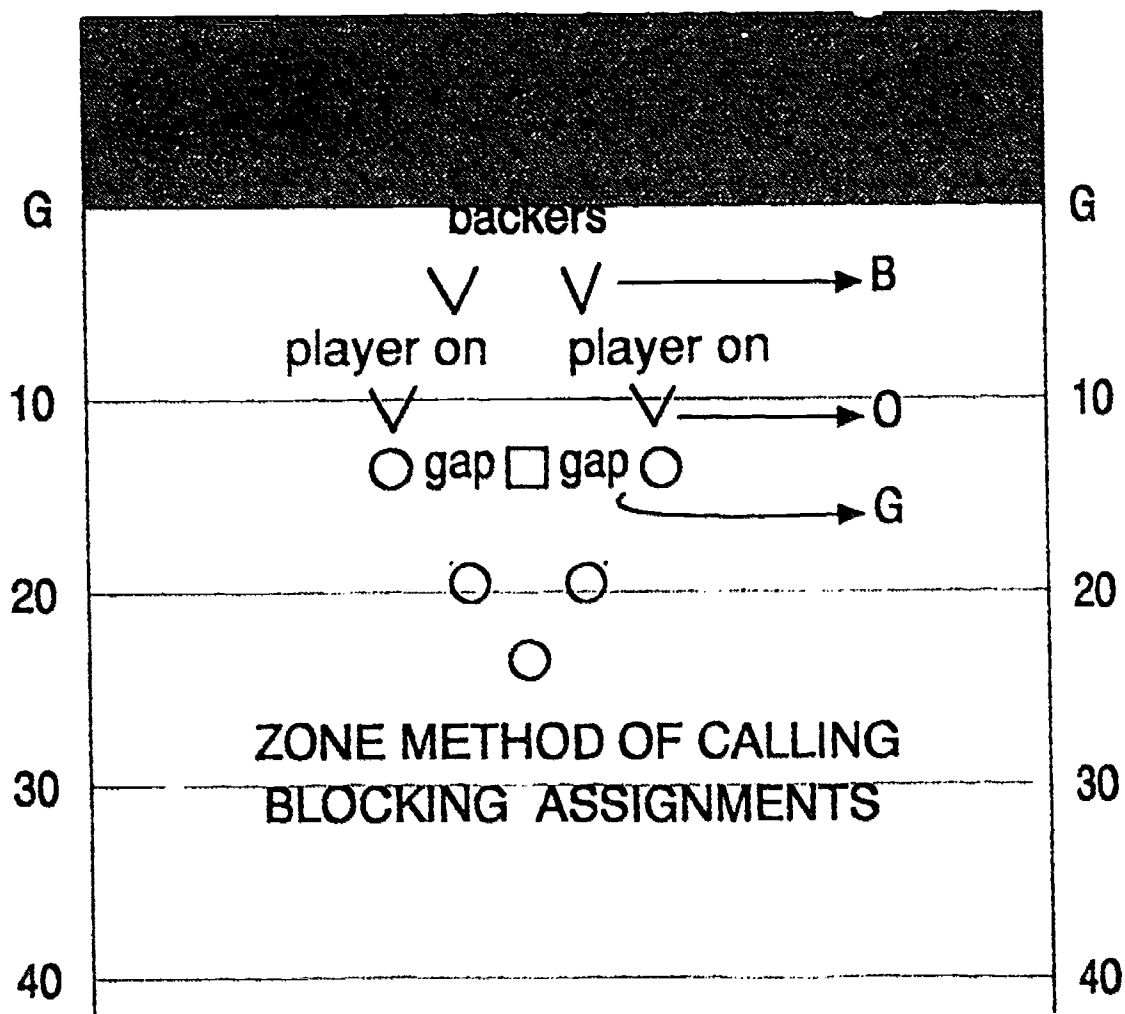
## BLOCKING ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. ZONE METHOD OF CALLING BLOCKING ASSIGNMENTS:

Using the same play of 35 sweep, let's look at the blocking assignments for that play. The team knows the play, but the defense may line up in a different defense each time the play is run. The blocking assignments may be different in each case. The defensive lineman/woman may line up inside of the player, right in front of the player,

outside the player, or not even in front of the player. Here is how a player can always block the right man/woman:

- G - gap is the inside gap toward the center position on the line.
- O - is man/woman lined up right in front of the lineman/woman.
- B - is when there is no one in front of you and you go for the linebacker.



There are three easy rules that apply to this system.

Rule one: the man/woman is always responsible for his/her inside gap.

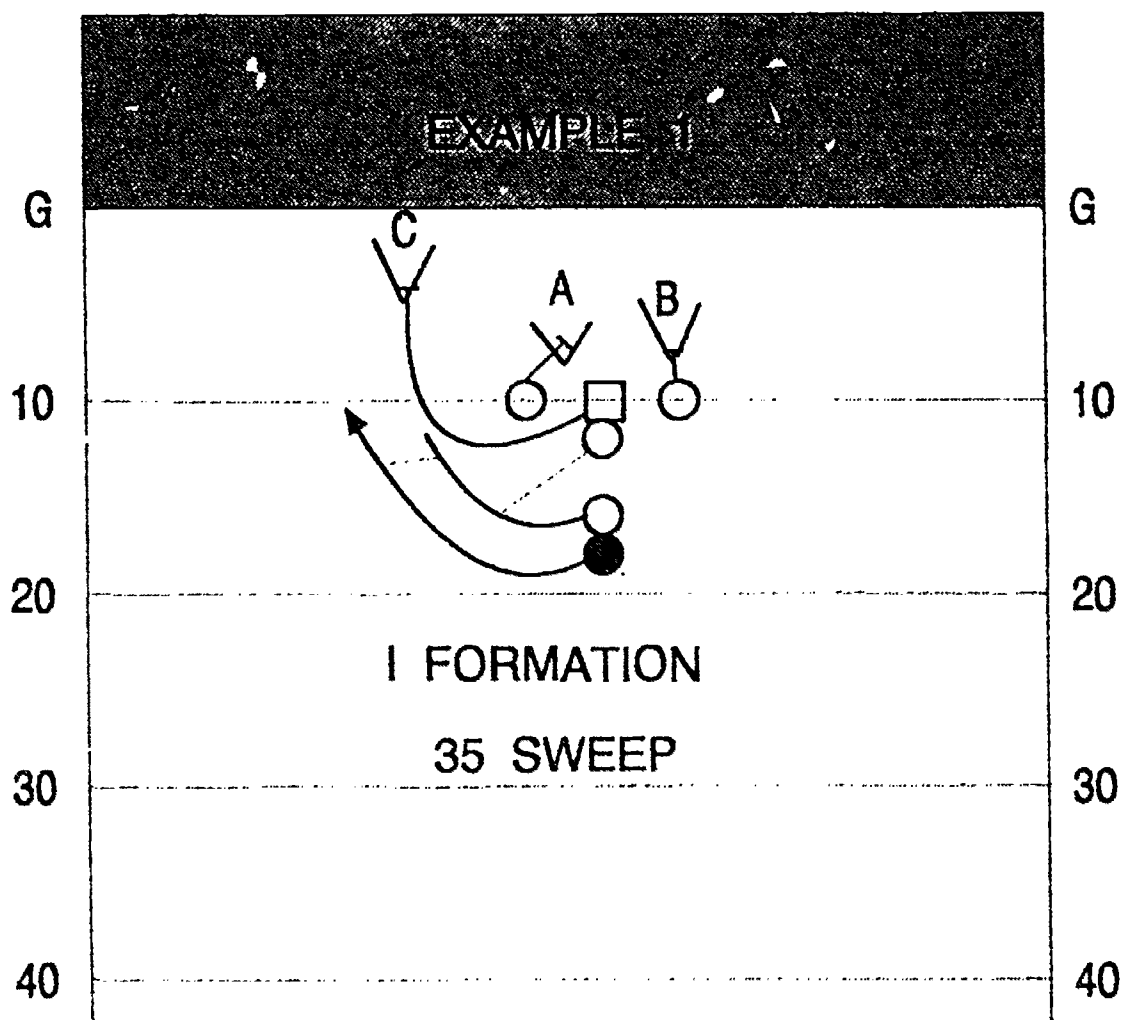
Rule two: the man/woman is always responsible for the player lined up in front of him/her unless his/her gap is filled, then he/she would call for help.

Rule three: if there is no one in the gap or there is no one in front of him/her, he/she should go for the backer.

Example: if the play 35 sweep is called and I am the left end (5) and my man/woman is on the inside gap, I will take him/her. If s/he is straight on, I will take him/her. If there is no one in front of me, I will take the linebacker.

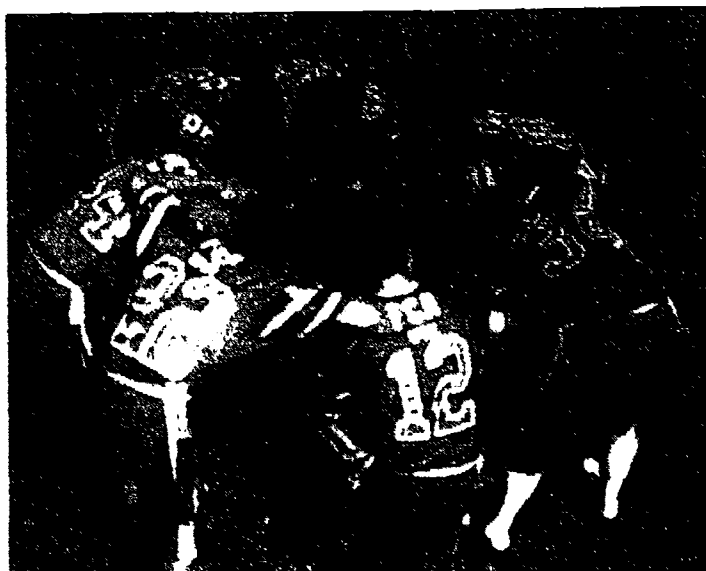
The following example is how this zone blocking method works:

1. The man/woman is always responsible for his/her inside gap.
2. The man/woman is always responsible for his/her man in front of him/her unless his/her gap is filled. If so, he/she calls for help.
3. If no one in gap and/or man/woman on, go for the linebacker.



## HUDDLE

The huddle is called by the center. Once everyone comes to the huddle only the quarterback talks. Only after the play has been called or while walking back to the huddle does a player speak to the quarterback. Otherwise, the only one who talks in the huddle is the quarterback. Everyone else listens.



## SHIFTS

Shifts are called to change the formation at the line of scrimmage. This is good strategy. The defense must make last minute adjustments at the line and then the offense has a chance to catch them in the wrong defensive alignment. This coach's philosophy is, the more you mix up the plays and formations, the more challenging it is for the defense.

## AUDIBLES

The quarterback has a method to change the play at the line. He/she sees that the defense is lined up in such a way that the play he/she called in the huddle has little chance of making it. To change the play he/she will call a color. Certain colors will be designated as "live colors." When this live color is called, the play named by the color following the live color will be the one for that down.

NOTE: The live color may change as the season goes. Also, when the play is changed the side the quarterback called at first (odd or even) still

remains the same. An example of the quarterback calling an audible goes as follows: in the huddle the play is 22 fake and 36 give off the t-formation on 2. The quarterback gets up to the line and sees that play will not work, so he/she audibilizes. Red is the live color. Down, set, 2, 4, RED 5-6 (two ends streak) is now the play and the one in the huddle is gone by the wayside. All players must stay alert and be ready and waiting for the changes.

## THE TWO-MINUTE DRILL OR HURRY-UP OFFENSE

This is designed to move the ball down the field with no huddle as fast as possible with the fewest number of plays. In flagball this is the best four to six passing plays, some short and others long, that will move your team up the field. This two-minute drill is usually saved for the last two minutes of the half, but can be used effectively any time during the game when you catch the defense sleeping or not ready.

## THE RUN AND SHOOT OFFENSE

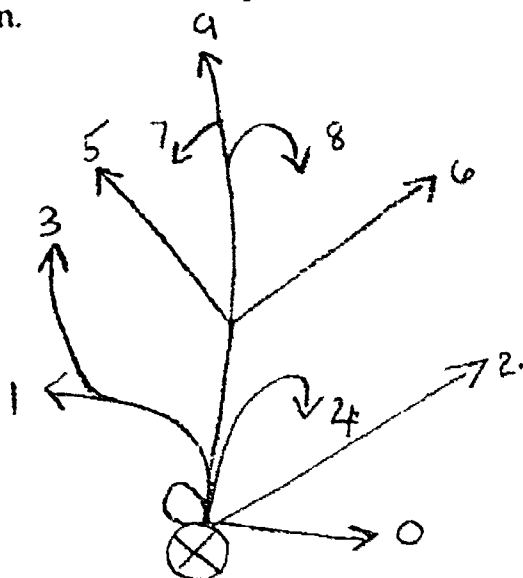
The run and shoot offense is a very explosive offense that requires a quarterback to have a strong arm and good vision to find the open player. The receivers must also be able to read the defense and find the open seams on the field. Many pro football teams use some variation of the run and shoot offense with success. Flagball, with only six players on a team, leaves a lot more room for passing the ball. This point alone indicates the effectiveness of the run and shoot offense in flagball.

The following diagram is of a route tree including all the pass patterns that will be called by the quarterback. The right side of the route tree is even and the left side is odd, which makes routes easier to remember. The rules for the receivers and for the quarterback are listed below with the route tree diagram.

### RUN AND SHOOT OFFENSE

#### RULES FOR PASS RECEIVERS:

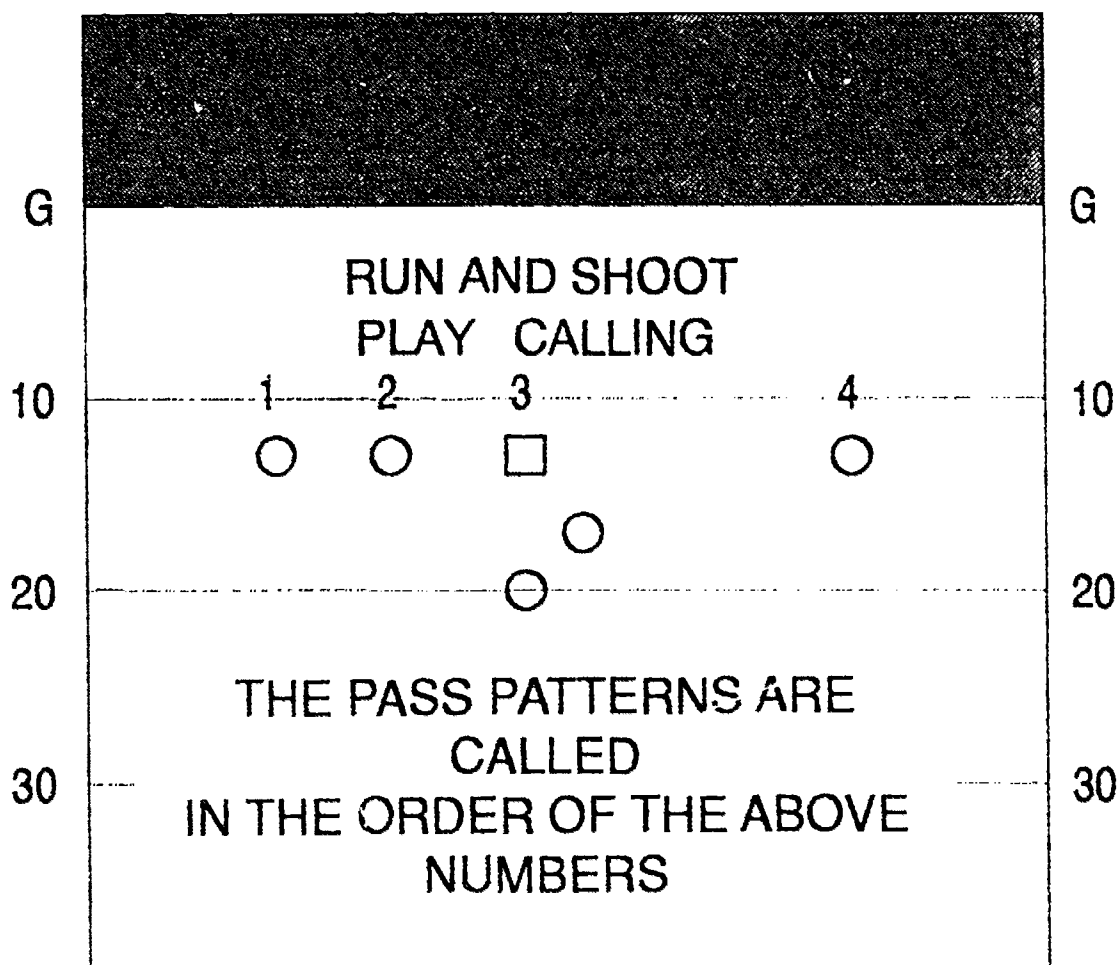
1. IF DEF. BACK STAYS--  
I GO!
2. IF DEF. BACK GOES--  
I COME BACK!
3. IF DEF. BACK GOES IN--  
I COME OUT!
4. IF DEF. BACK GOES OUT--  
I GO IN!



## RULES FOR THE QUARTERBACK:

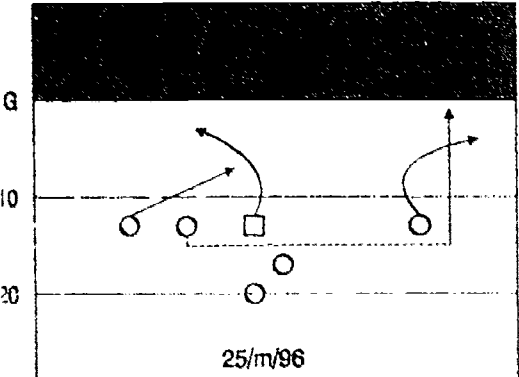
1. CHECK ANY PASS RECEIVER NOT COVERED, BLUE, 7-10 YDS.
2. READ THE DEF. BACK BECAUSE THAT IS WHERE THE RECEIVER WILL GO.

The theory behind this offense is that whatever the defense does is ineffective. The quarterback reads the defense as he/she comes up to the line of scrimmage. He/she has plenty of time because there is no huddle. After reading the defense, he/she calls out the numbers of the routes in the order of the previous diagram. After the numbers have been called, he/she calls out "down, set, motion" and the ball is snapped on the correct number. In every play the slot player is in motion and lines up and goes to the wide side of the field. All passing plays likewise are run to the wide side of the field unless the quarterback sees the middle open. If this occurs the number of the back is called and it is a run up the middle by the single back. All other players on the offense are alerted to this audible and know it is a running play and either block or clear their zones.

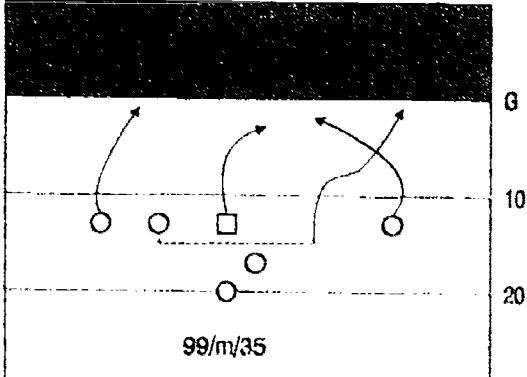


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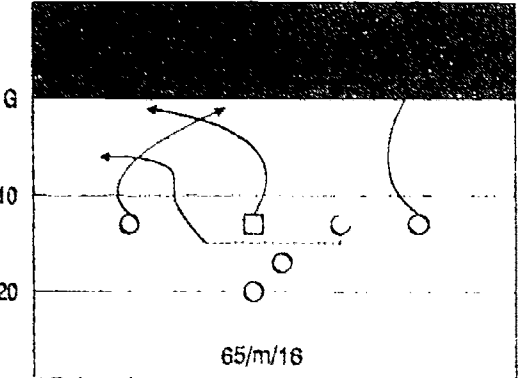
It is good to select a set number of plays that help clear and overload areas of the field to help get the quarterback and players into the flow of the new offense. Once the players learn to read the defense, this offense is very hard to stop. Having the single halfback lined up with the quarterback in the backfield allows the quarterback to take the option. The halfback then either pitches to the quarterback and blocks or does not take the option and goes out for a short swing pass. The defense dictates which play selection the halfback uses. If there is a heavy rush the quarterback dumps the short swing pass over the rush. If the rush is not that strong, the quarterback takes the option from the halfback who continues blocking and goes with the play. The following are examples of plays that could be called in the run and shoot offense. There are two plays from the right and two plays from the left.



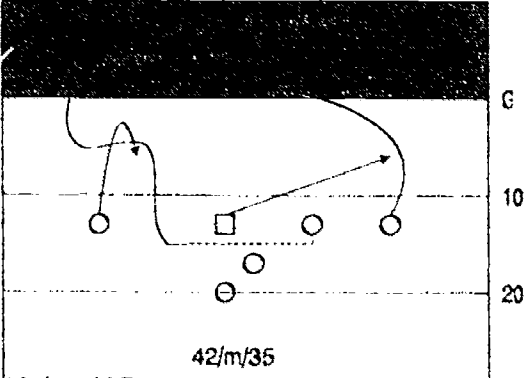
25/m/96



99/m/35



65/m/16



42/m/35





## CHECK LIST FOR TEAM OFFENSE

1. Build offense around the talent available.
2. Think of putting together a good series with all the elements mentioned in this chapter.
3. Make sure all players know the numbering system for the players and the holes in the line.
4. All offensive players must know how the blocking assignments are called and that the center calls them.
5. To learn plays, draw them out, walk through, run half speed, then full speed.
6. Know huddle alignment.
7. Make sure team knows how, when, and where to shift if called.
8. Offensive unit must know the method of calling audibles. Know live colors.
9. Able to run two- minute offense on field in less than two minutes
10. Make sure offensive unit is familiar with passing zones.



## CHECK LIST OF COMMON ERRORS IN OFFENSIVE PLAY

1. Offense may be too complicated for talent, or offense may not match the type of talent available.
2. If moving the ball is hard, may not be including all the play selection of a quick hitter, reverse, etc. listed in the text.
3. Test players on the numbering system and blocking assignments. Don't let them play until they know them.
4. If having problems with play execution - break the play down and walk through it.
5. Practice over and over again the shifts and audibles so the players learn to listen for the call. If the desired response does not come, slow it down and keep repeating.
6. Perfect practice makes perfect. This goes especially for the 2 minute offense. Work on it until it can be run when asleep. Run it with no huddle.
7. If having trouble with learning the passing zones - give players a written test of the material. Make them pass the test before they can play.



# PASSING ZONES

## THE QUARTERBACK'S MAP SHOWING HORIZONTAL ZONES OF PLAY

Goal line \_\_\_\_\_

### SCORING ZONE (5 yard line to goal)

- |                           |                  |                      |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| (a) Hardest yards to make | (d) No penalties | (f) Drive hard       |
| (b) Greatest resistance   | (e) Use Scoring  | (g) Use best back    |
| (c) No mechanical errors  | Zone series only | (h) Hustle and poise |

5 yard line \_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL PLAY ZONE (Opponent's 20 yard line to their 5 yard line)

- (a) Keep using successful plays. Cannot afford to lose yards in this situation.
- (b) Pass zone. Use screens and sideline cuts.
- (c) Ball to best back. Drive hard.
- (d) No penalties. No mechanical errors.
- (e) Trick plays can be used.

20 yard line \_\_\_\_\_

### FORWARD PASS ZONE (From opponent's 30 yard line to their 20 yard line)

- (a) Put pressure on the defensive team. Best position for scoring plays.
- (b) Use trick plays.
- (c) Use deceptive plays.
- (d) Call running play passes, i.e., action passes.
- (e) Spread the defense with flankers and split ends.
- (f) Run the draw play; fake pass and run zone.
- (g) With fourth down coming up and beyond the 25 yard line, kick out of bounds. The quarterback may think of a field goal if he/she has the kicker.

30 yard line \_\_\_\_\_

### RUN, PASS, KICK ZONE (From your own 30 to opponent's 40 yard line)

- (a) Quarterback can now operate practically his/her entire offense.
- (b) Remember the quarterback's law of compensation.

- (c) Try to use a long gainer to get into scoring territory.
- (d) Think of using series or companion plays.
- (e) Use successful pass plays.
- (f) Can use ball-handling plays now.
- (g) Use flankers and split ends to see how the defense adjusts.
- (h) Until team reaches midfield, kick on fourth down.
- (i) Know the classifications of play and when to use each.

30 yard line \_\_\_\_\_

**RUN AND KICK ZONE** (From your own 20 to your own 40-yard line)

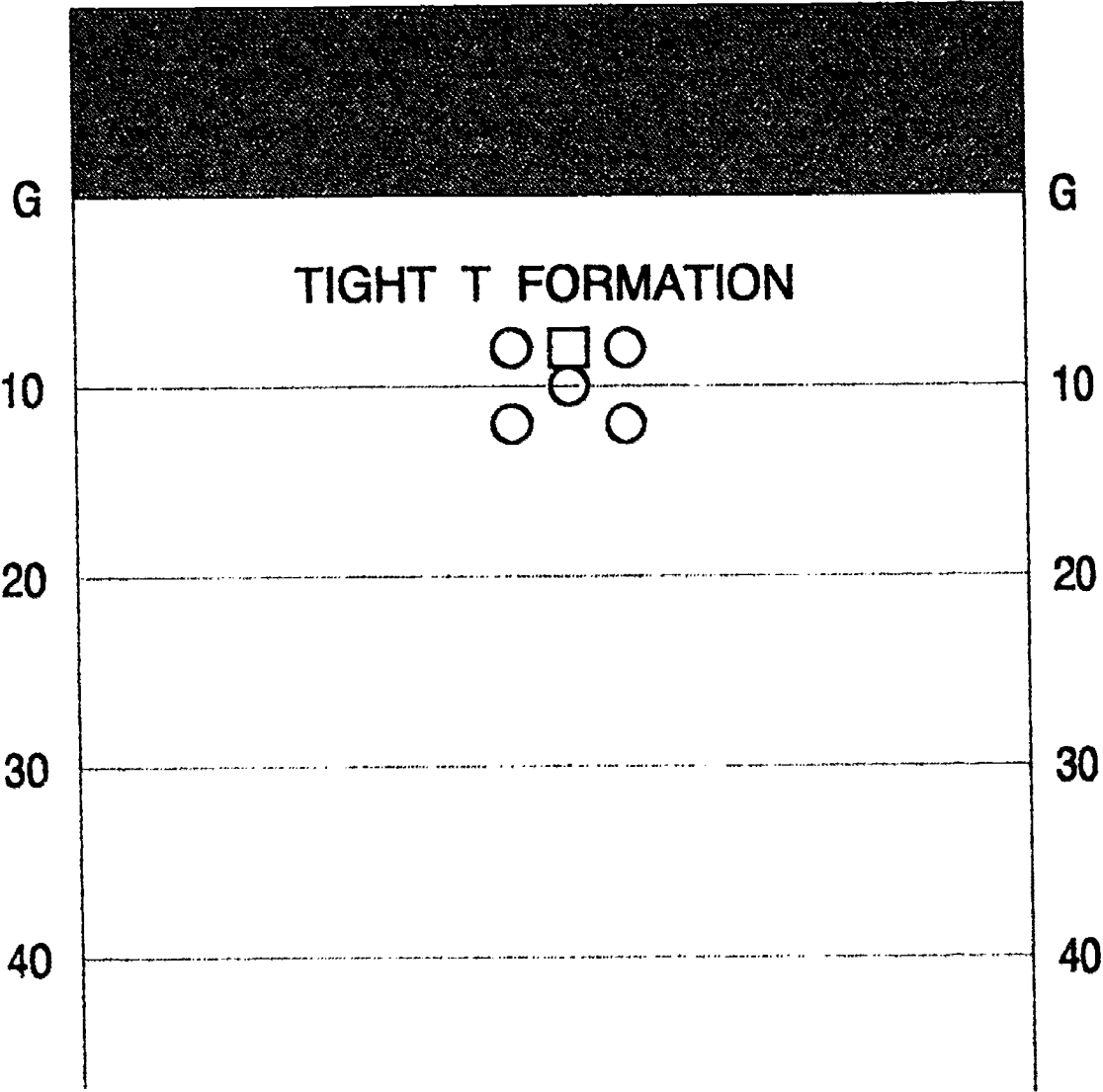
- (a) Offense limited until the team reaches its own 40-yard line.
- (b) Try to get one or two first downs before kicking.
- (c) It will be difficult to punch out first downs, one after another, with the 'ground game alone. Do not try to do so.
- (d) Kick on second or third down.
- (e) Good quick kick zone.
- (f) On a pass, use a screen and sideline cuts.
- (g) Be sure of pass patterns and protection.
- (h) Use a fake pass and run or draw play on long yardage.
- (i) Use safe running plays, and know the classifications of plays.

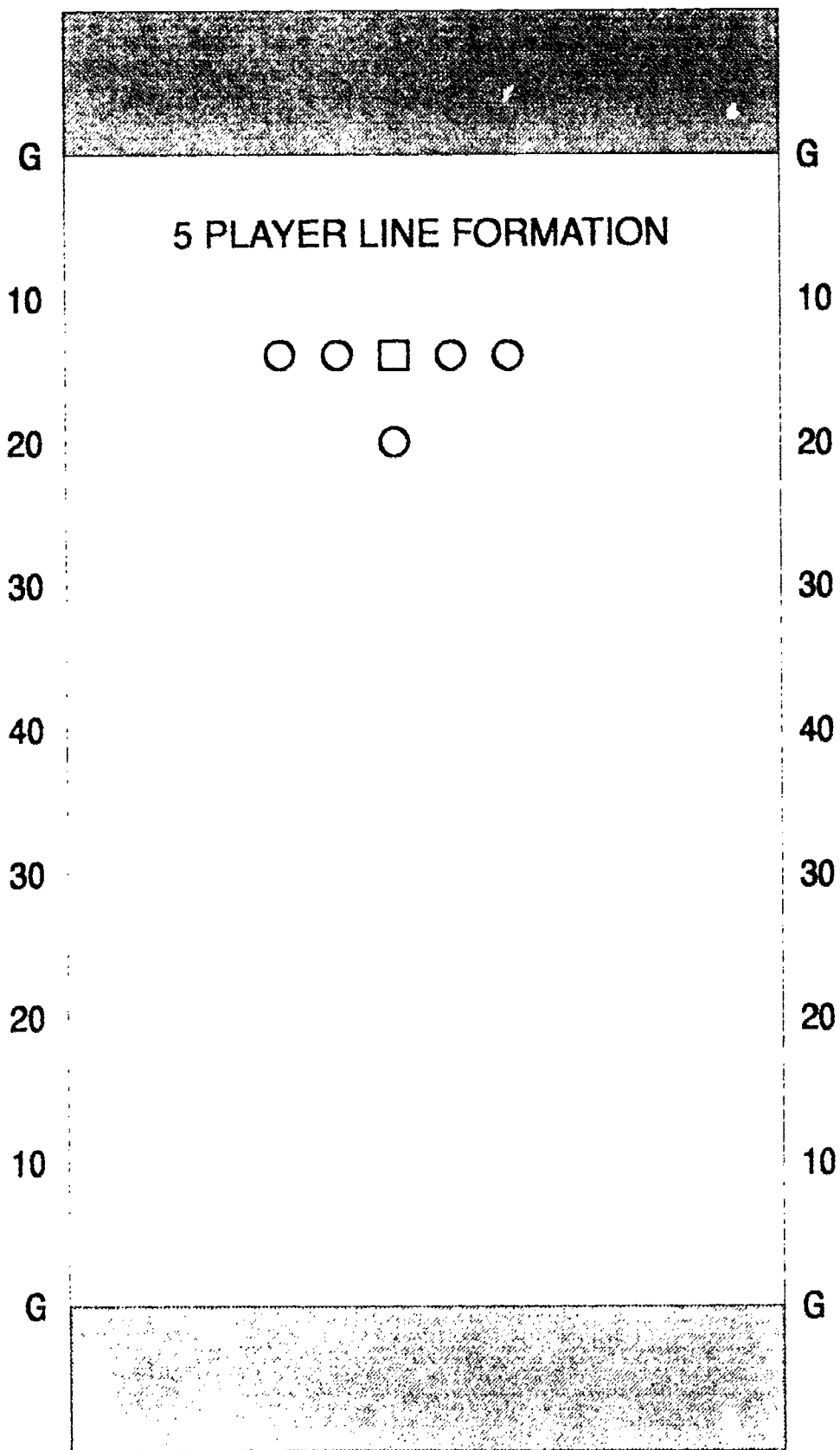
20 yard line \_\_\_\_\_

**DANGER ZONE** (From your own goal line to your own 20-yard line)

- (a) Nearer to quarterback's goal line, the more the offense is limited.
- (b) Get the ball out the quickest and safest way.
- (c) Use danger zone offensive series only.
- (d) Call for the best back to carry the ball.
- (e) Check the play, the starting count, and assignments.
- (f) Make no mechanical errors.
- (g) Try to get a first down before having to kick.
- (h) If behind own 10 yard line, the quarterback should kick on first or second down.
- (i) From his/her 10 to 20 yard line on second or third down.
- (j) Check punt protection.
- (k) Avoid laterals and cross backs. On a pass, use screens. Avoid ball handling plays. Use T-punt formation or a quick kick.

OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS & PLAYS





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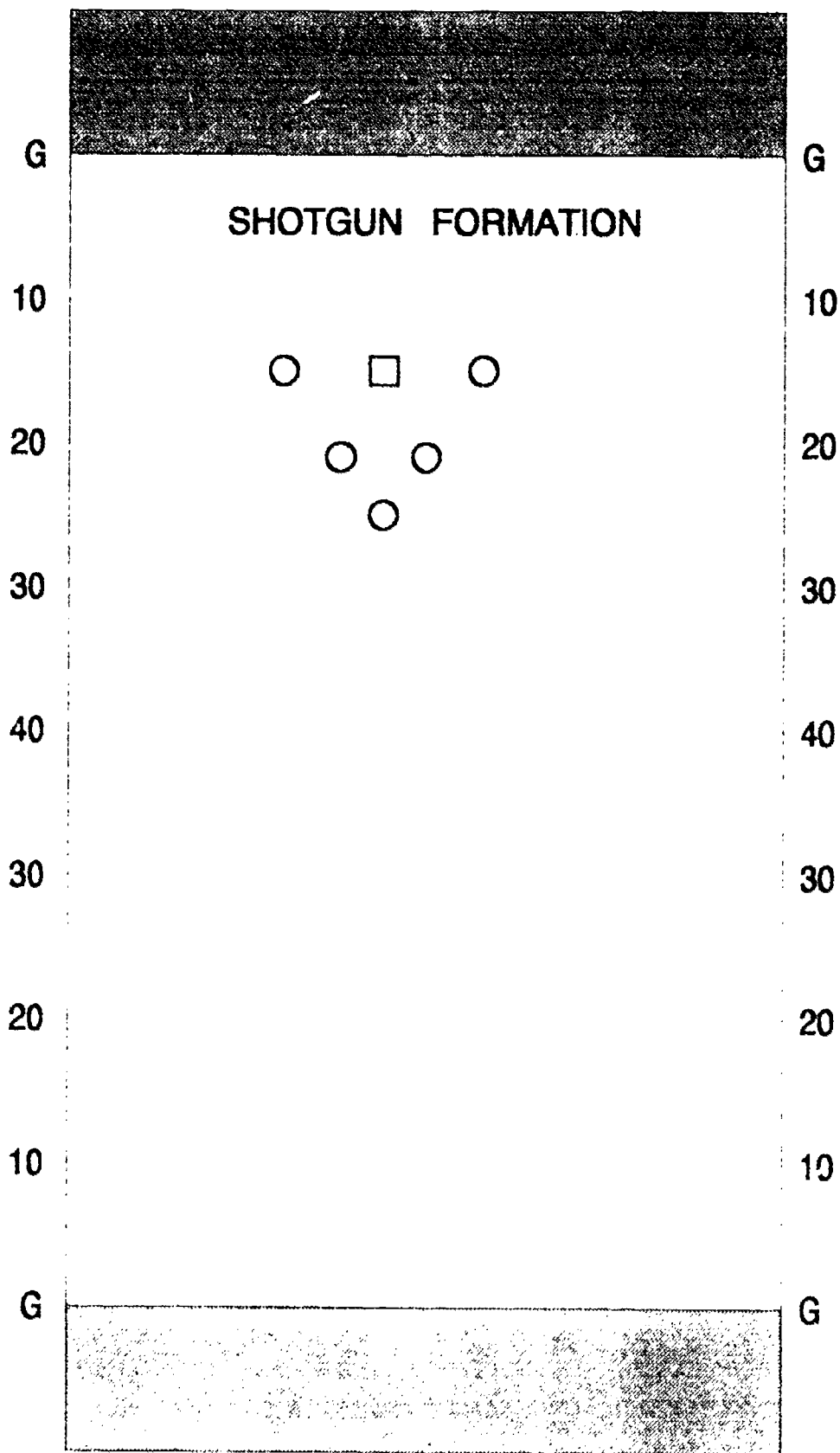
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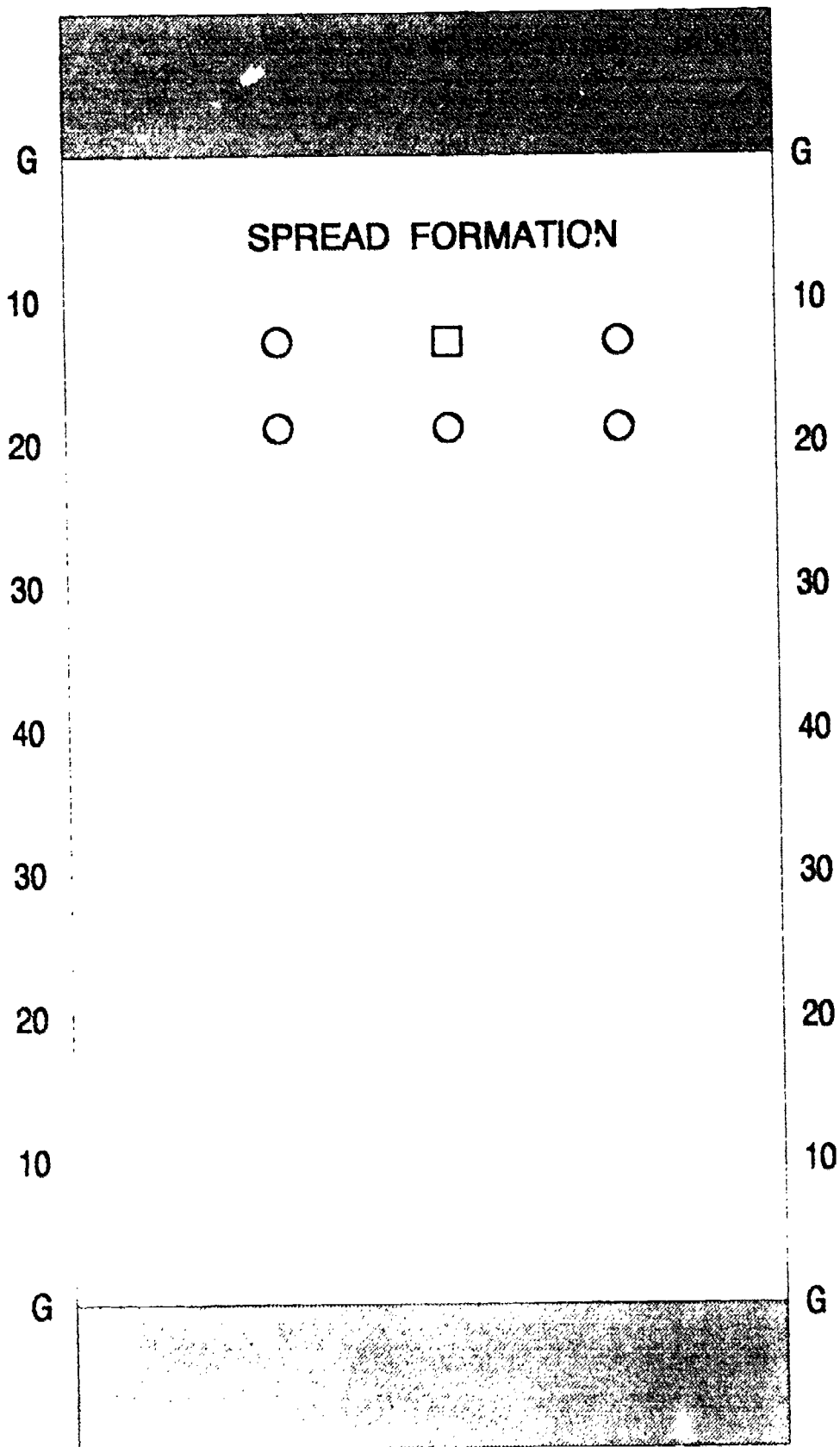
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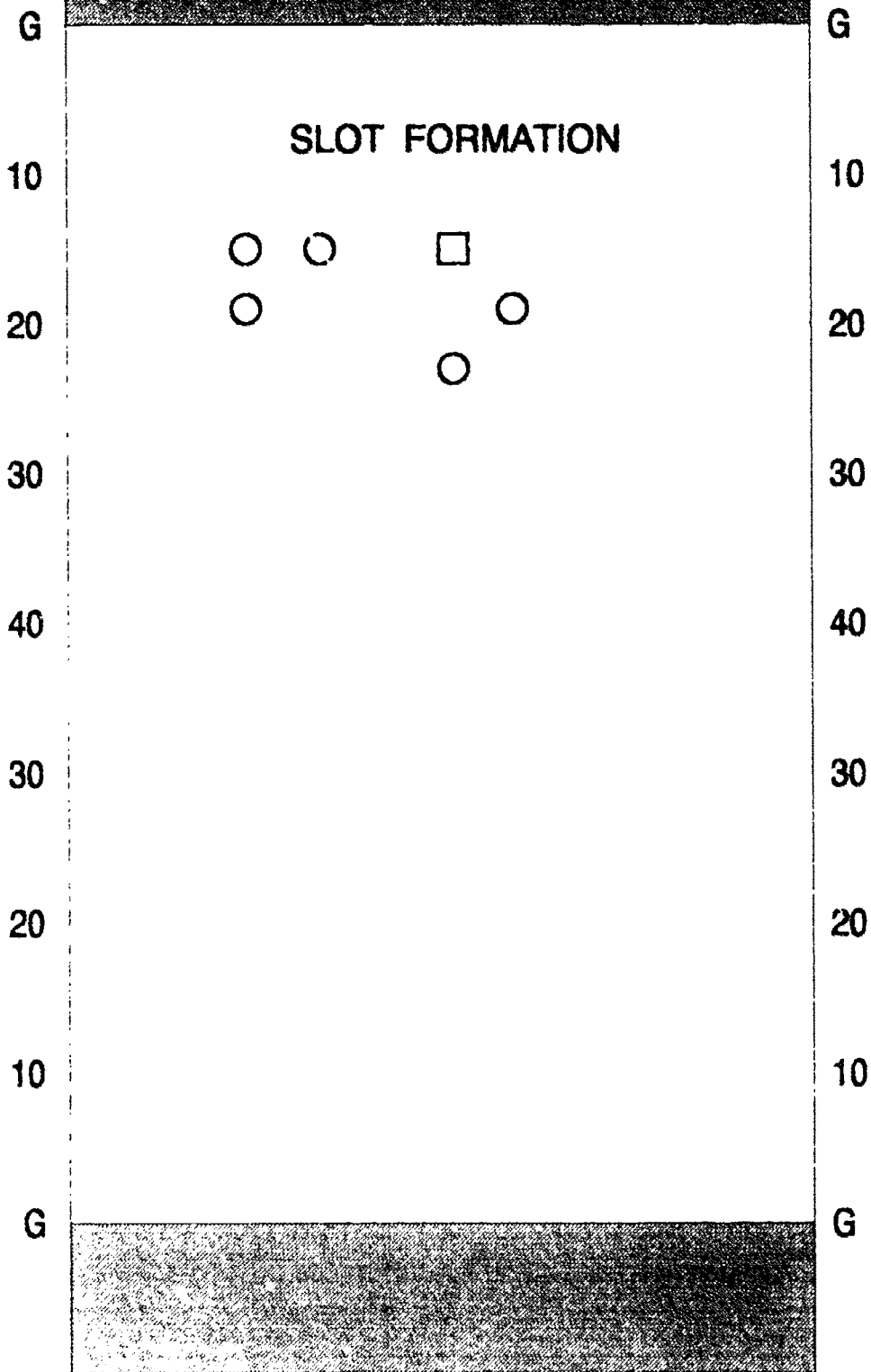


I FORMATION



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# STACKED FORMATION

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# TRIPLE OPTION FORMATION

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# 7 PLAYER FORMATION

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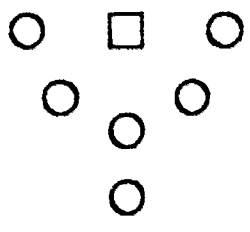
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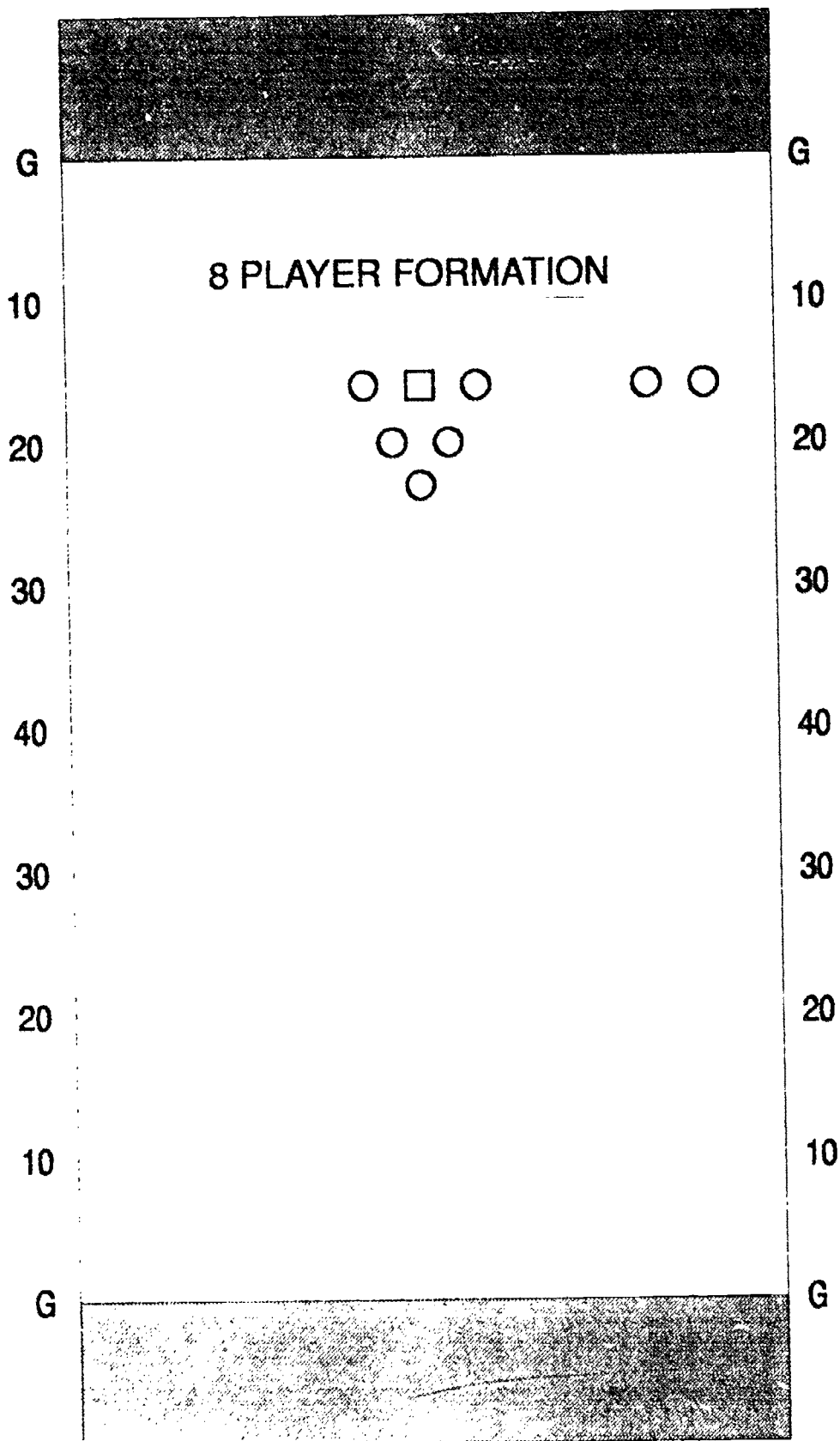
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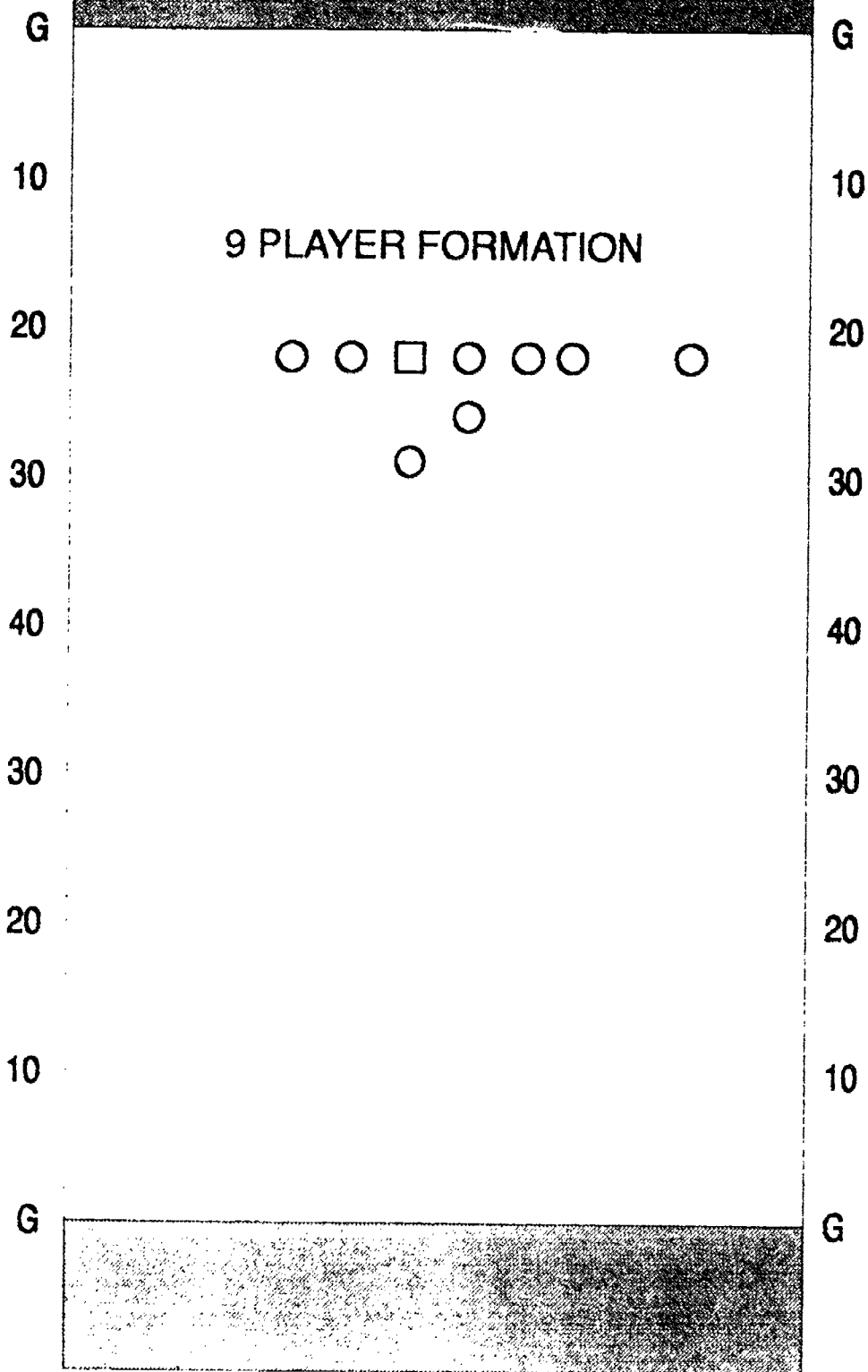
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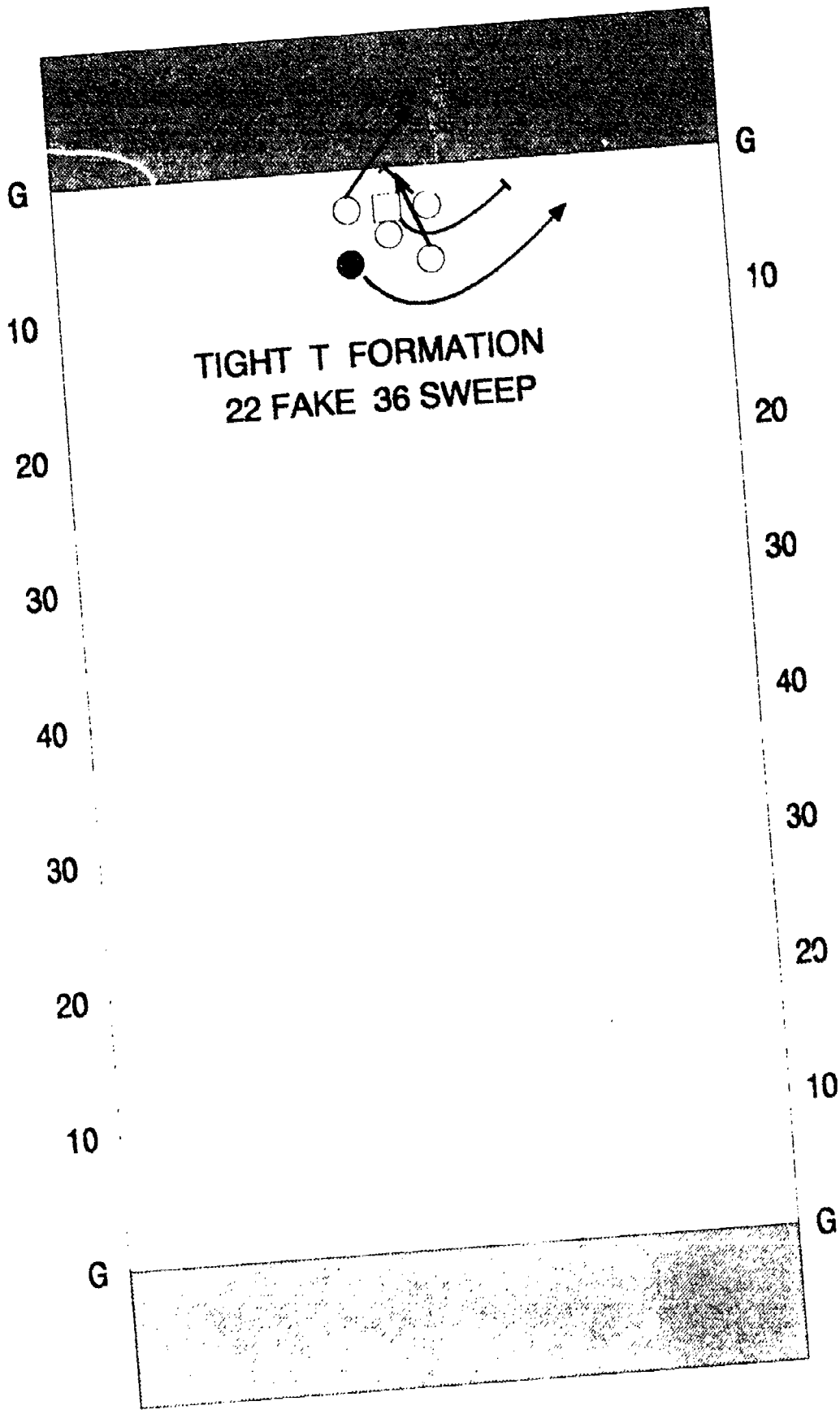
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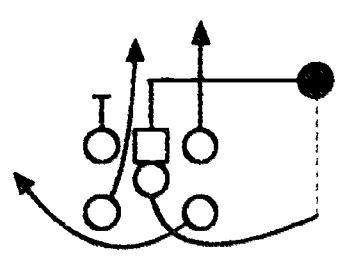
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**TIGHT T FORMATION**  
**31 FAKE / 25 FAKE**  
**QB BOOTLEG PASS**

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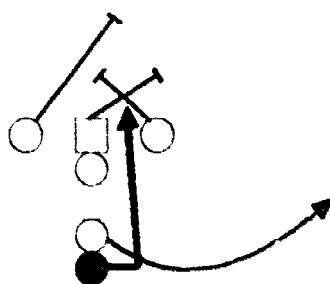
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26 FAKE 32 DIVE



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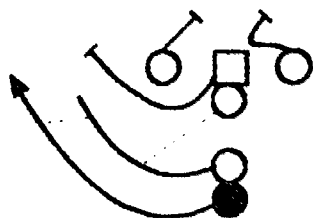
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I FORMATION

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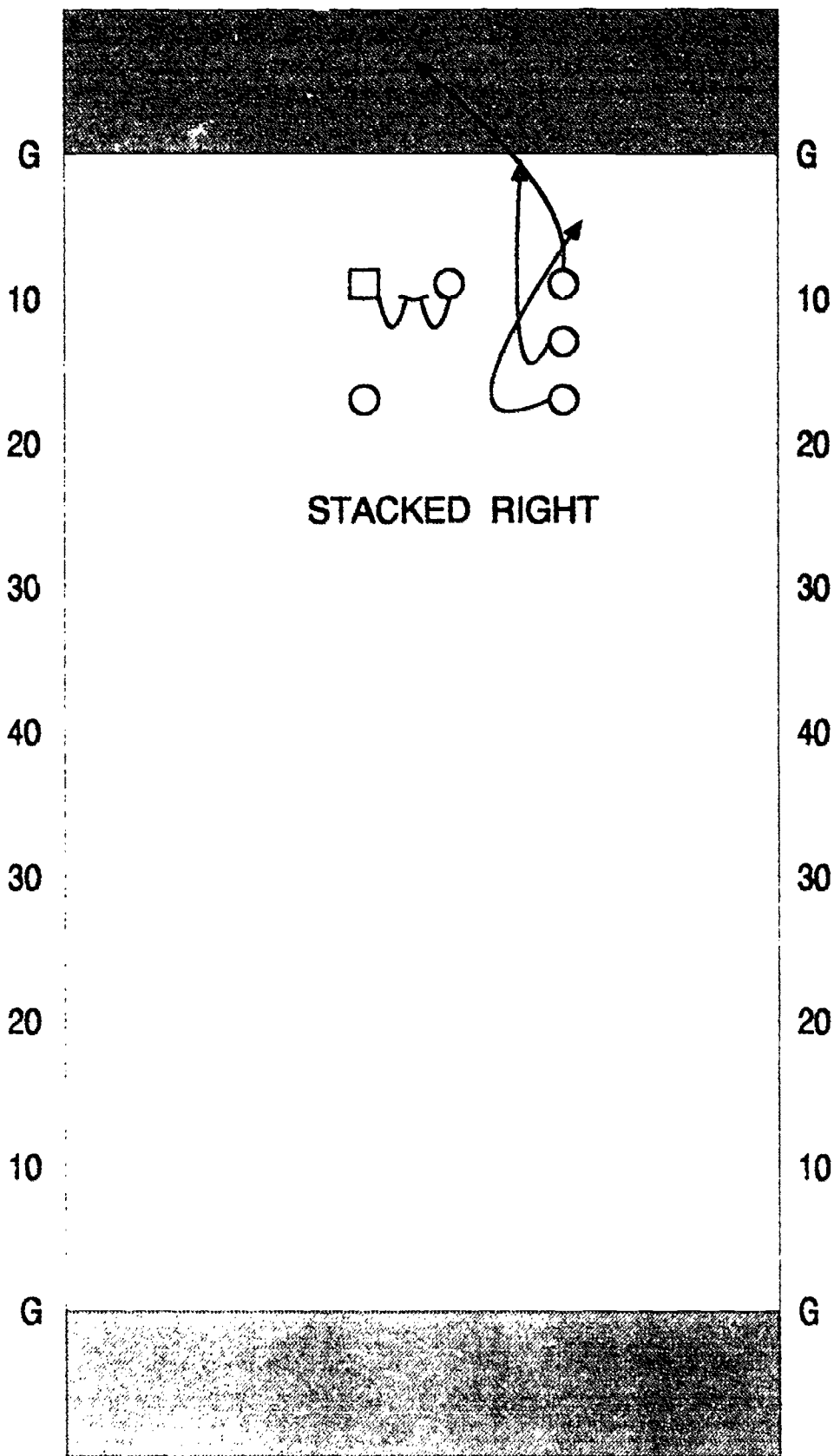
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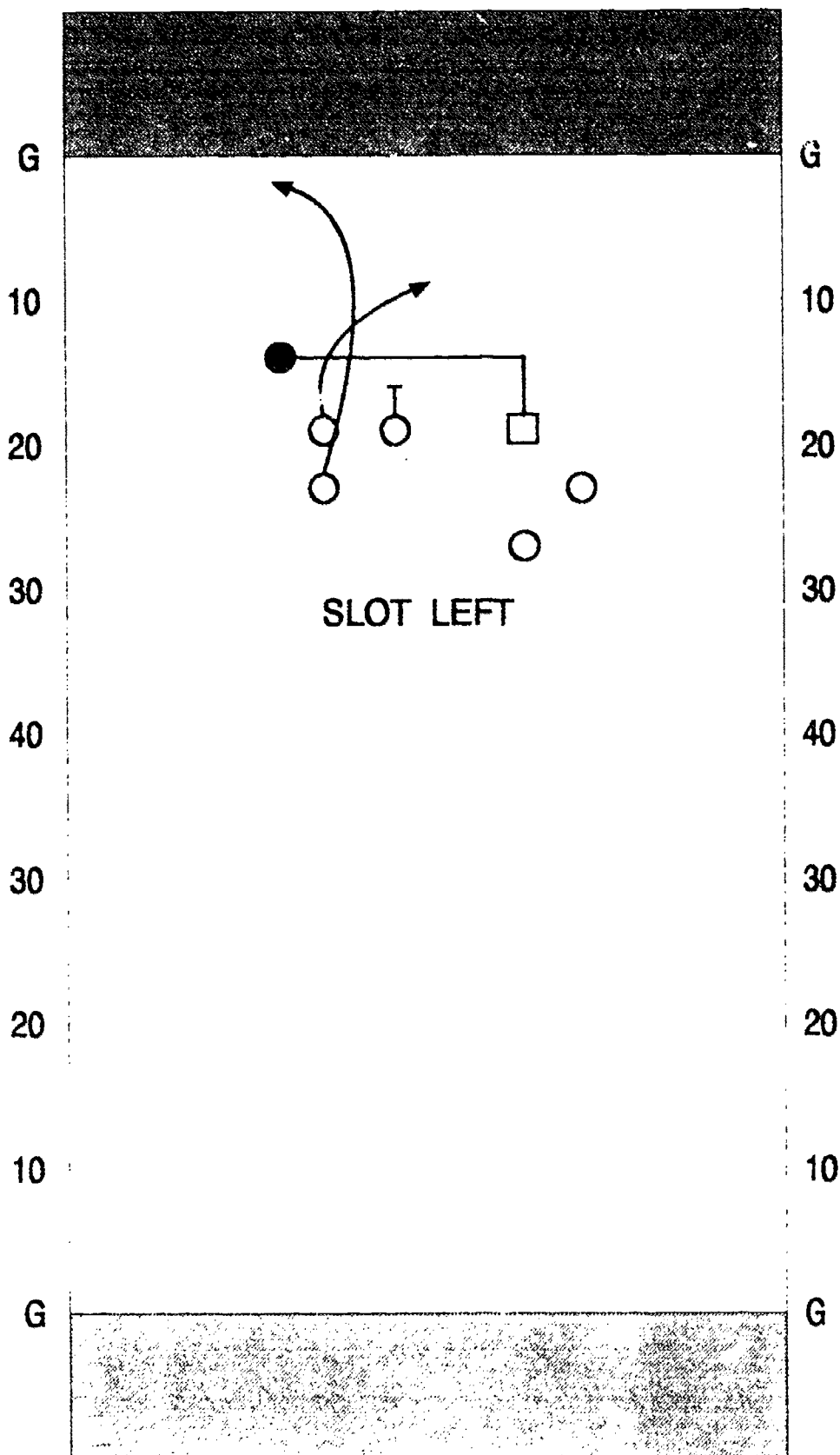
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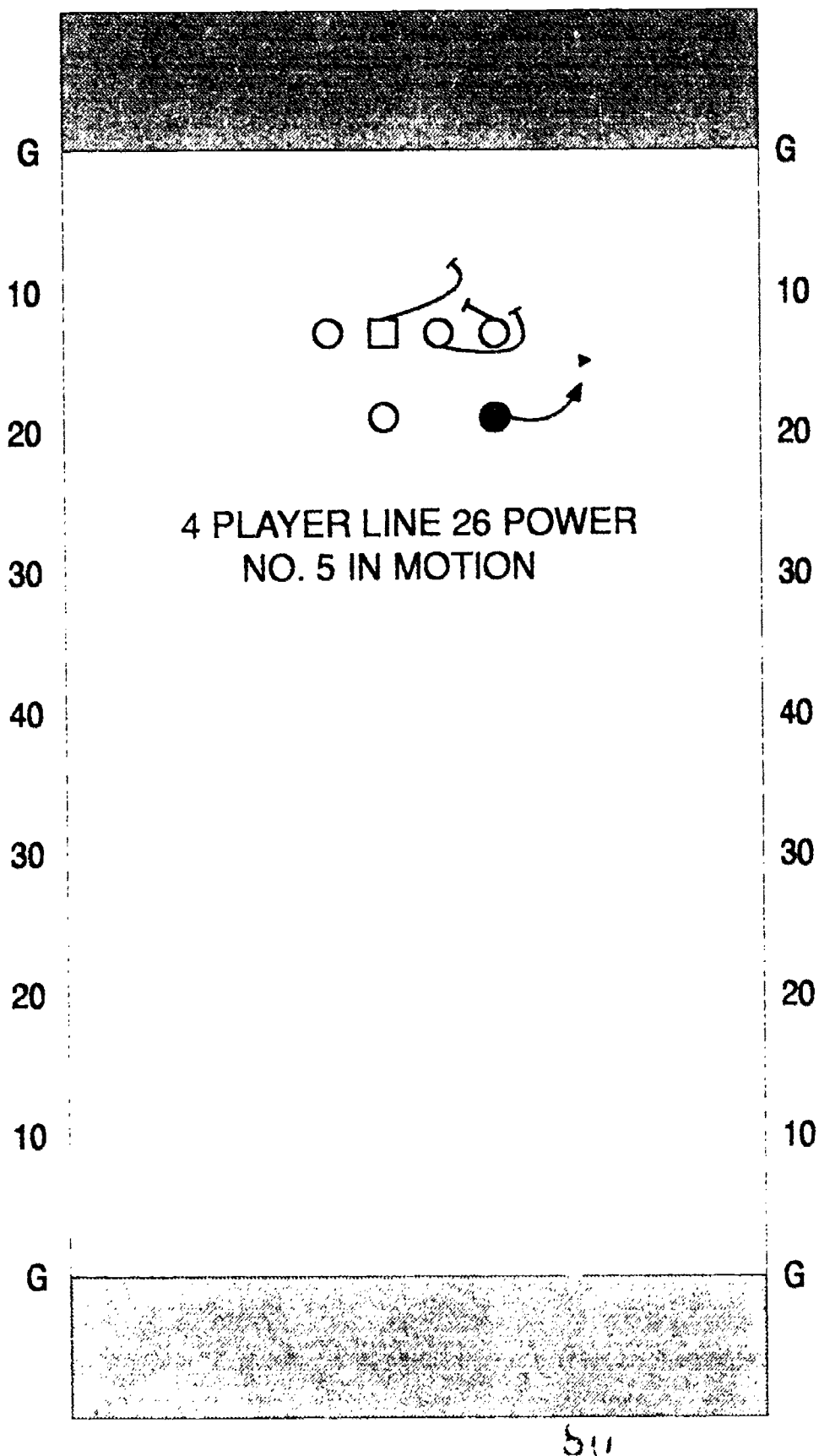
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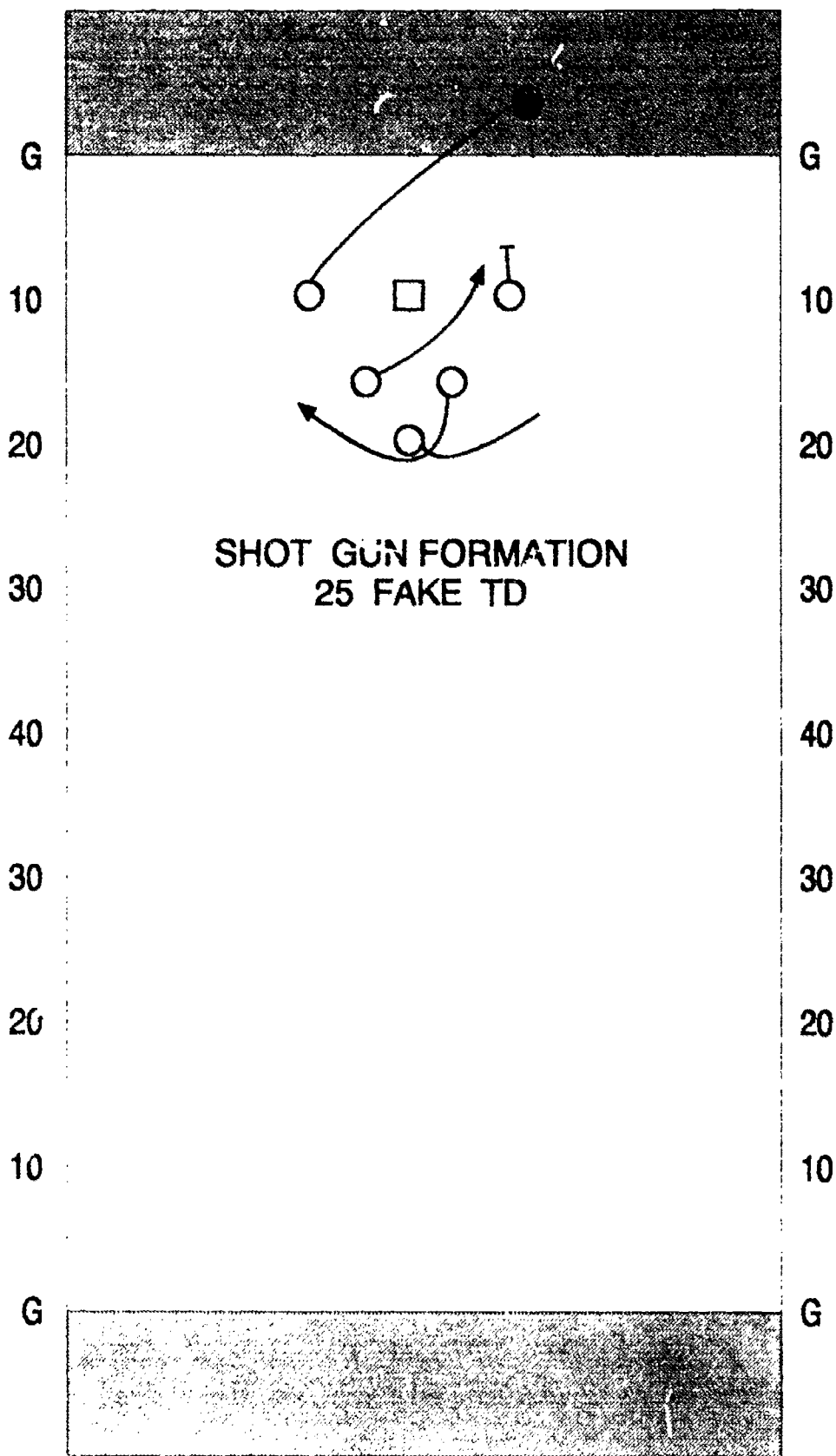


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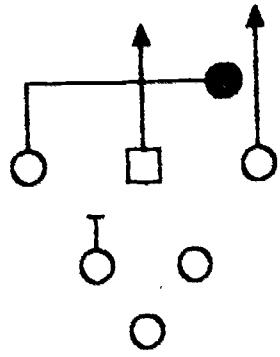
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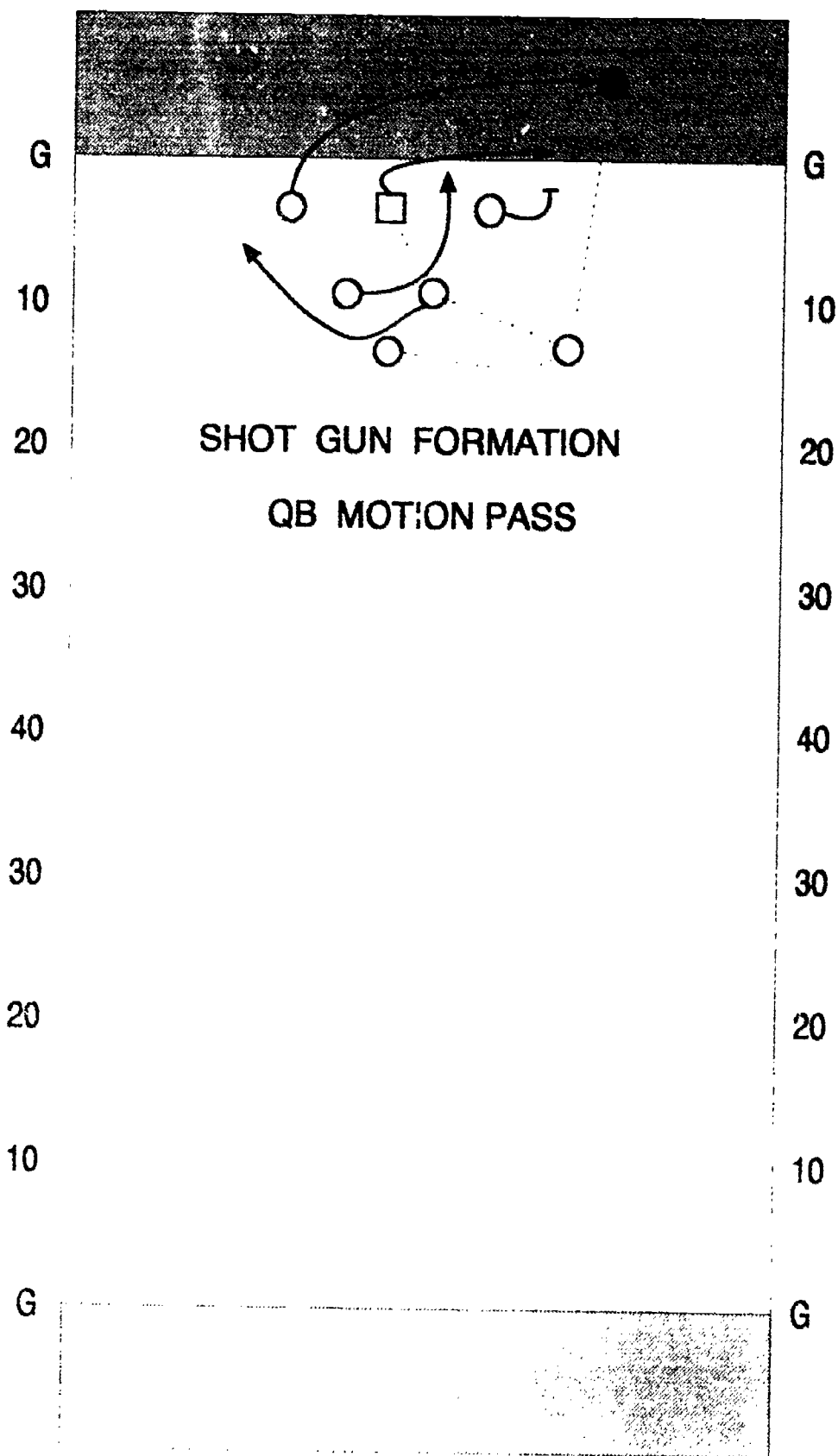
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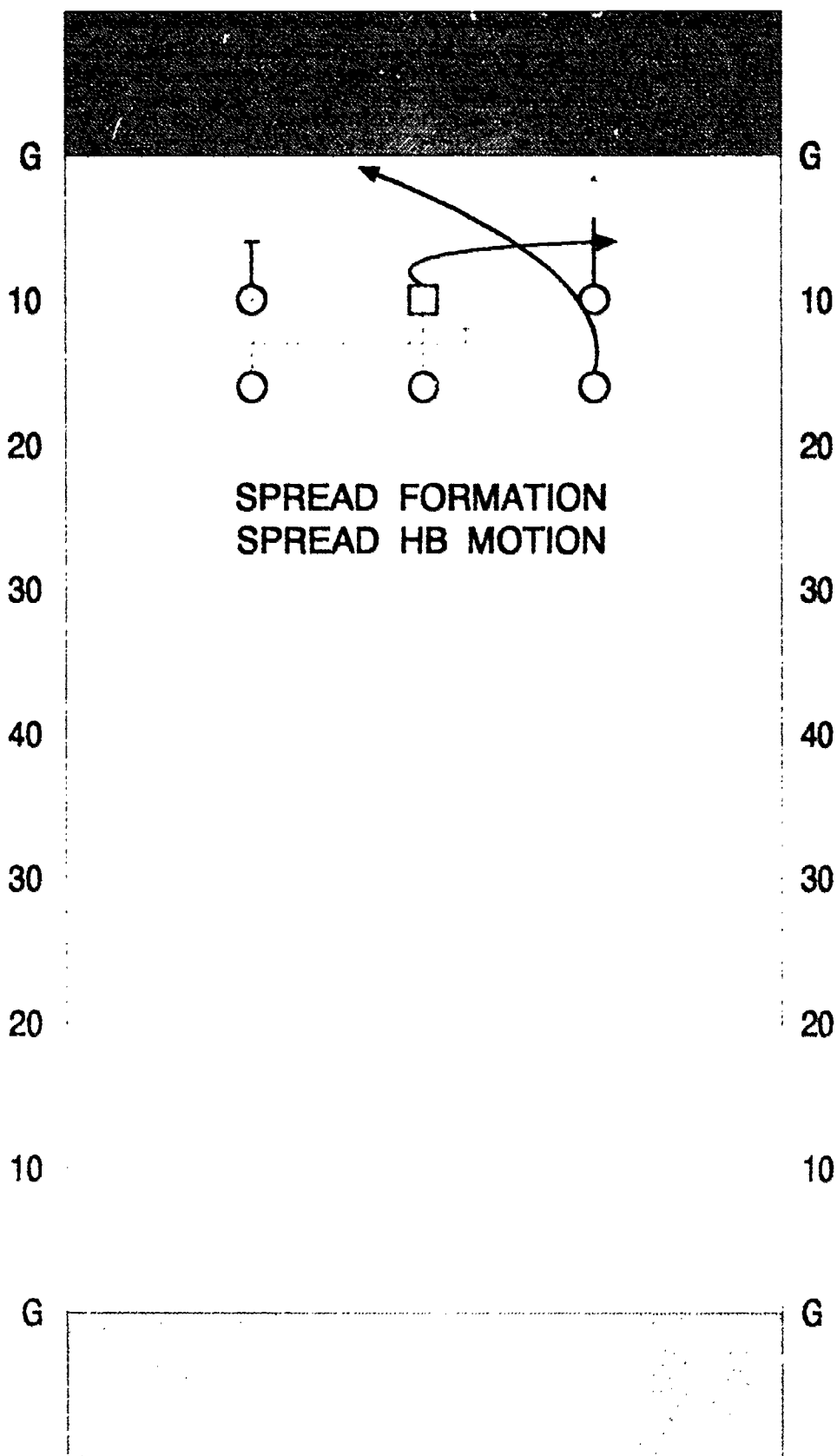
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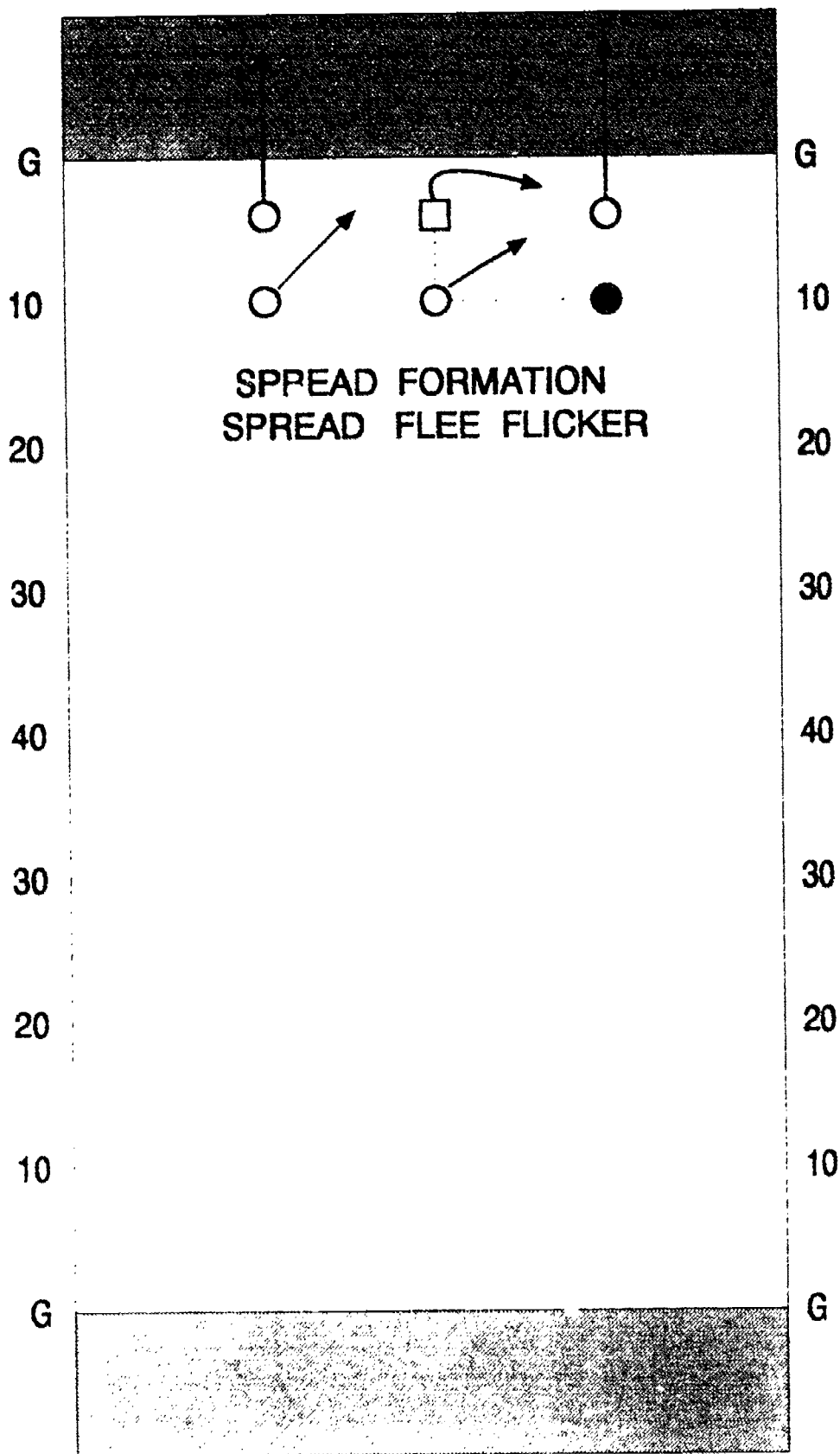


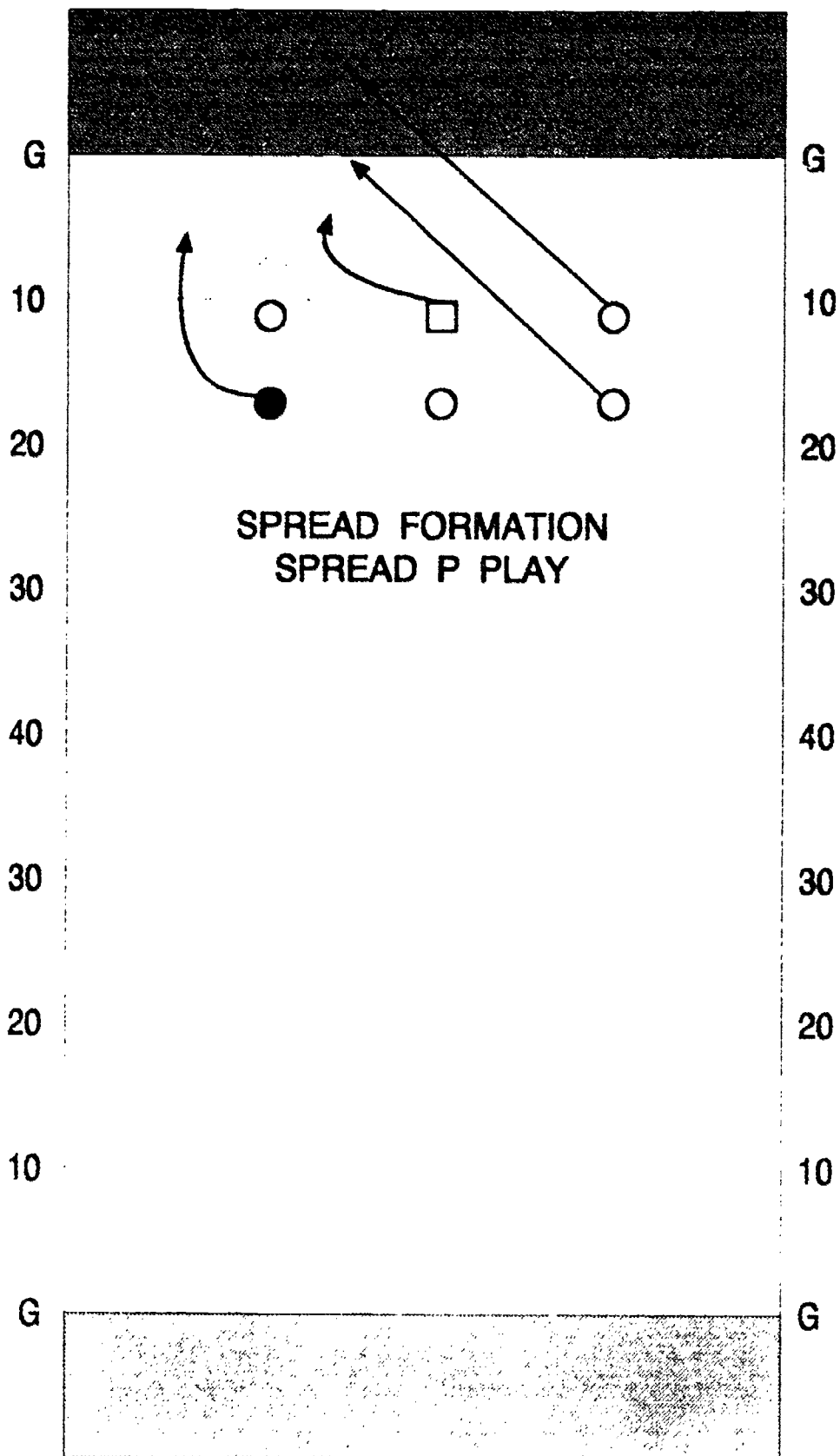
SHOT GUN FORMATION  
CLEAR AND HIT WITH PASS

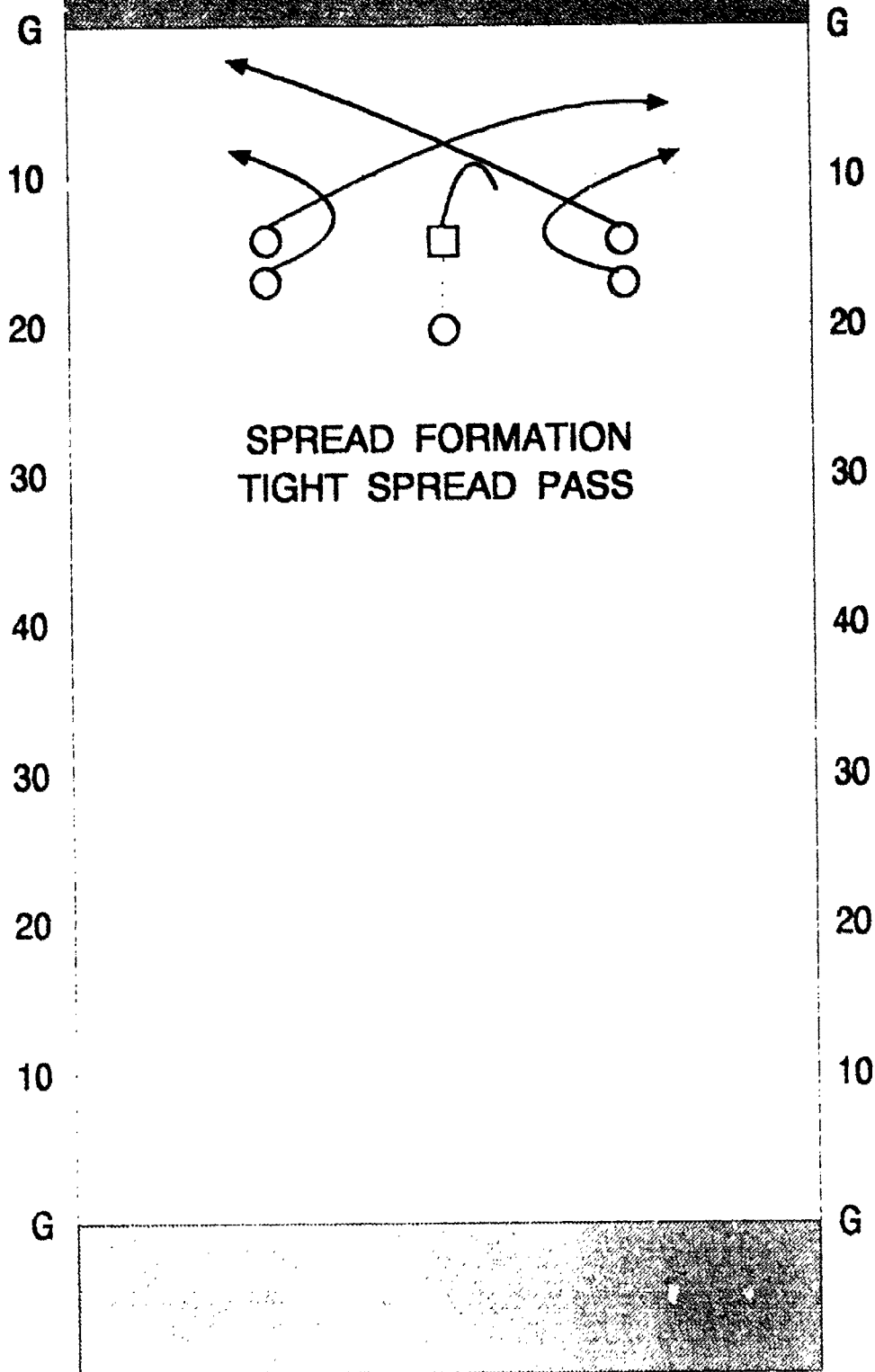


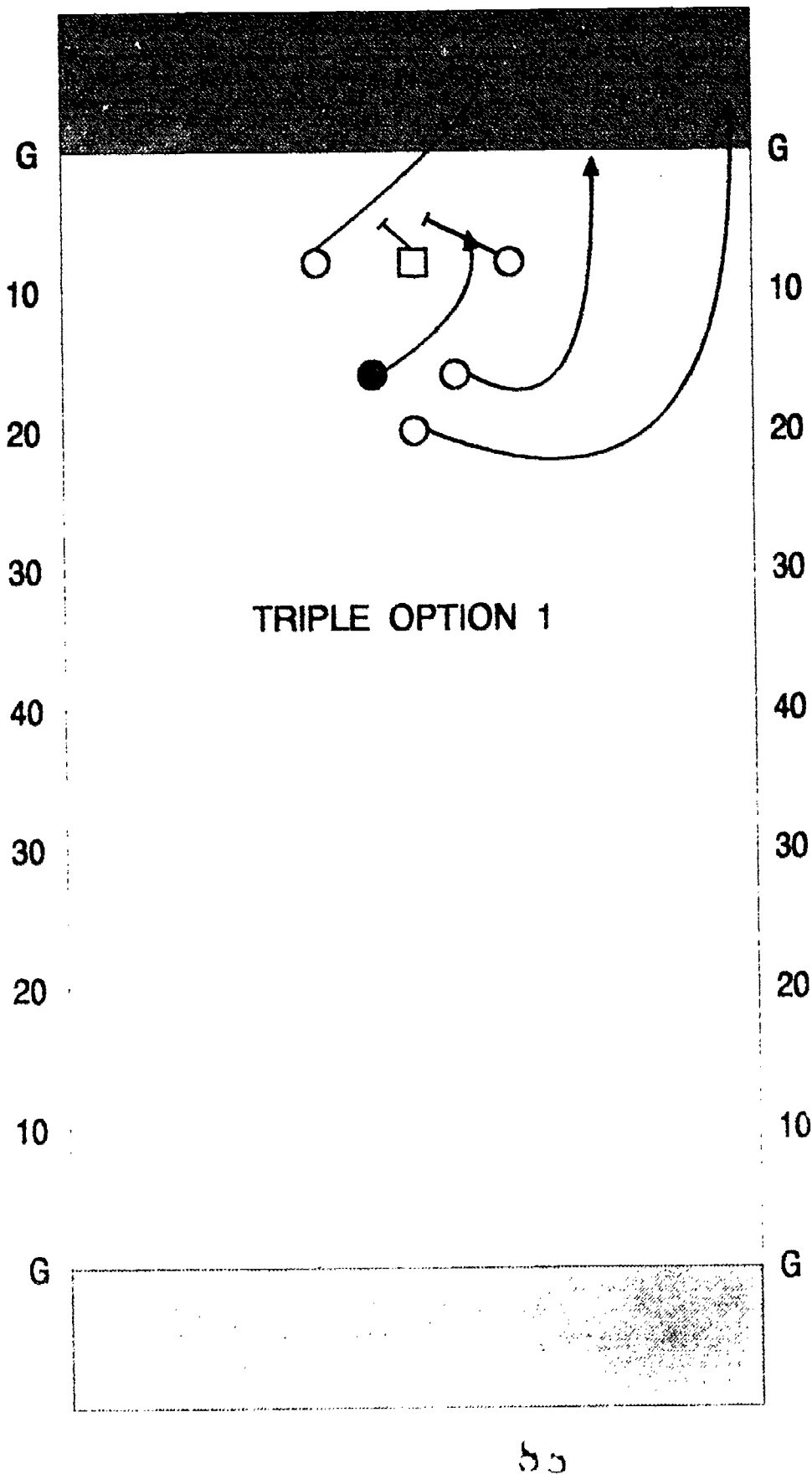


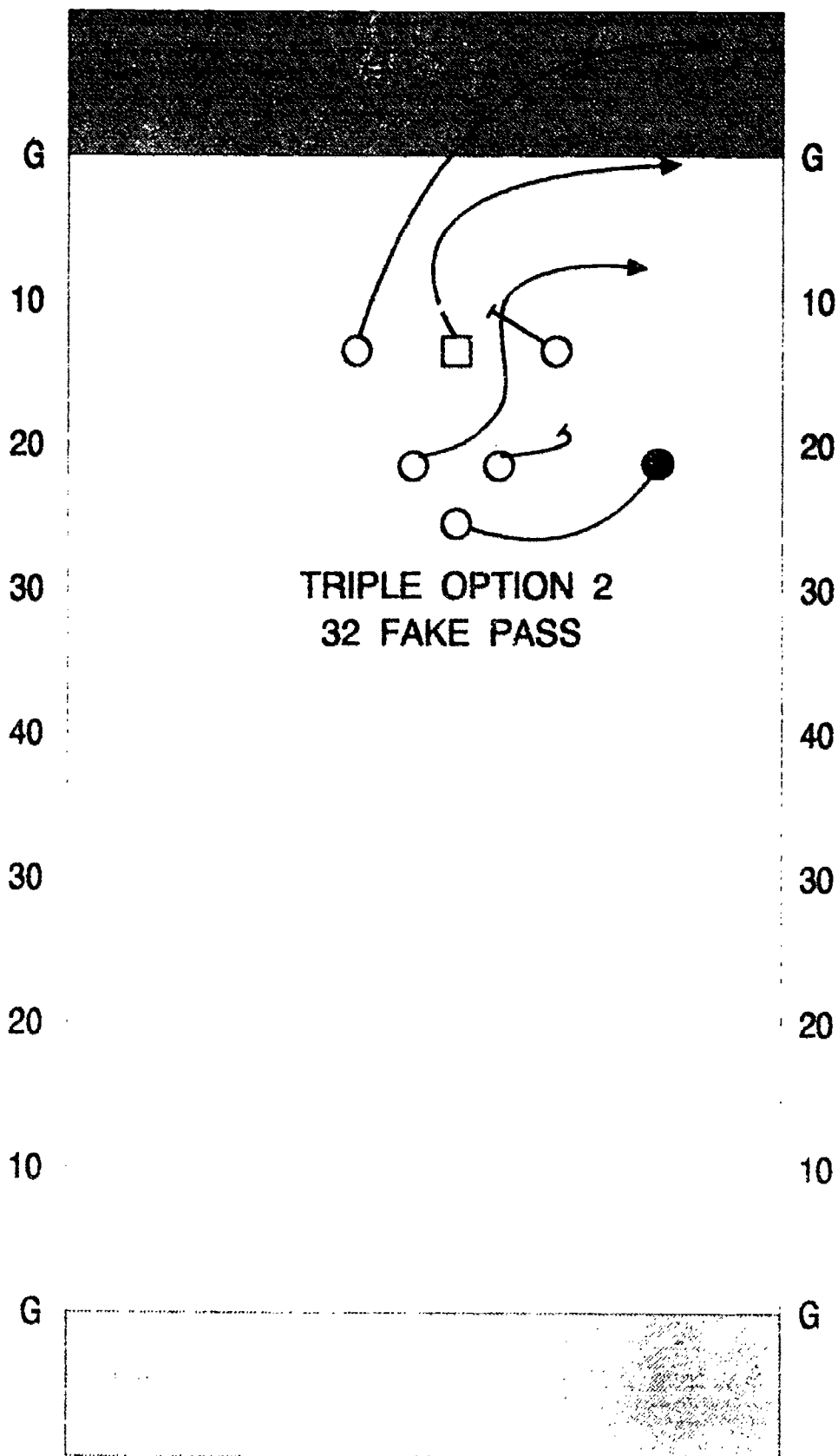


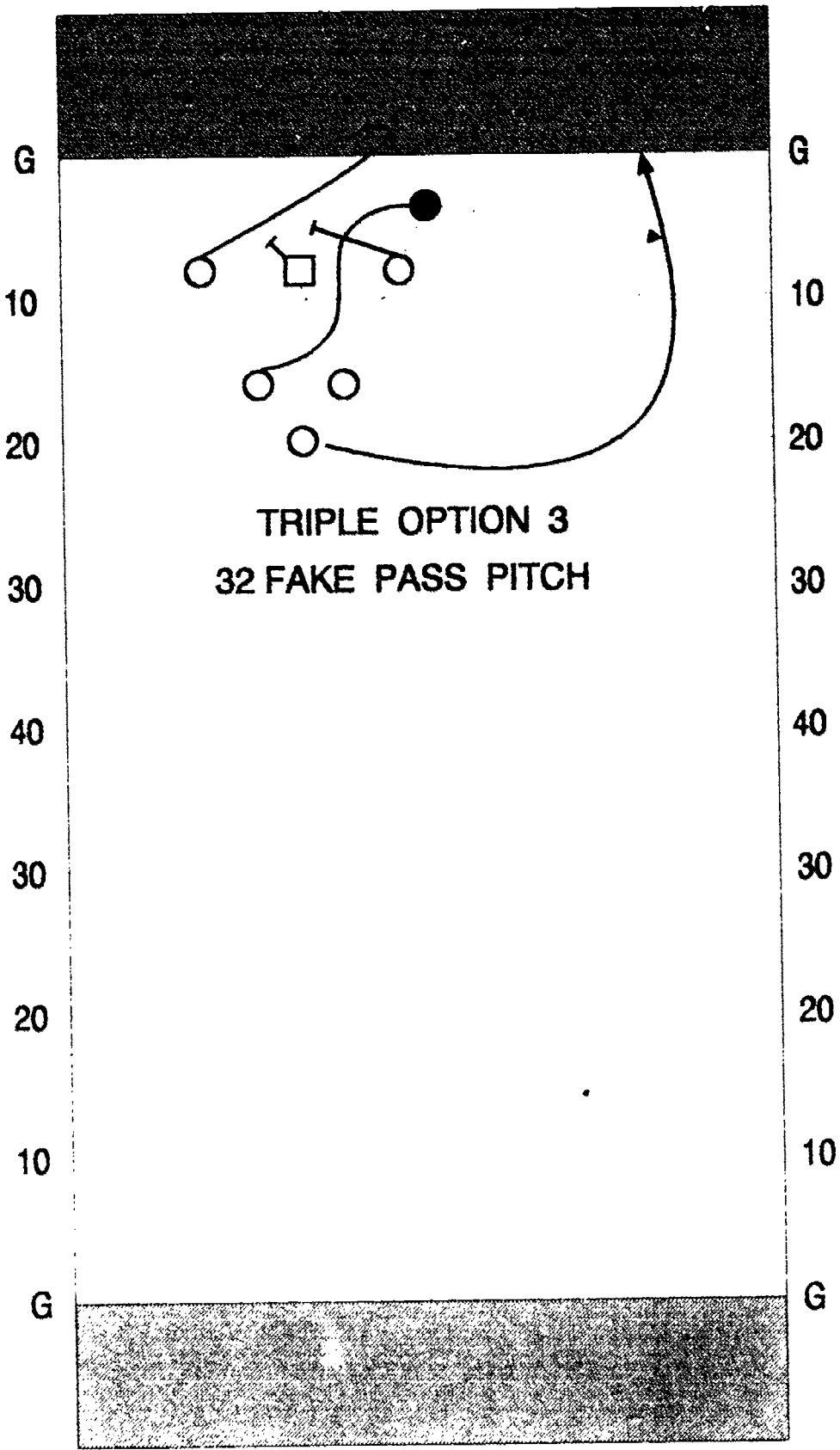




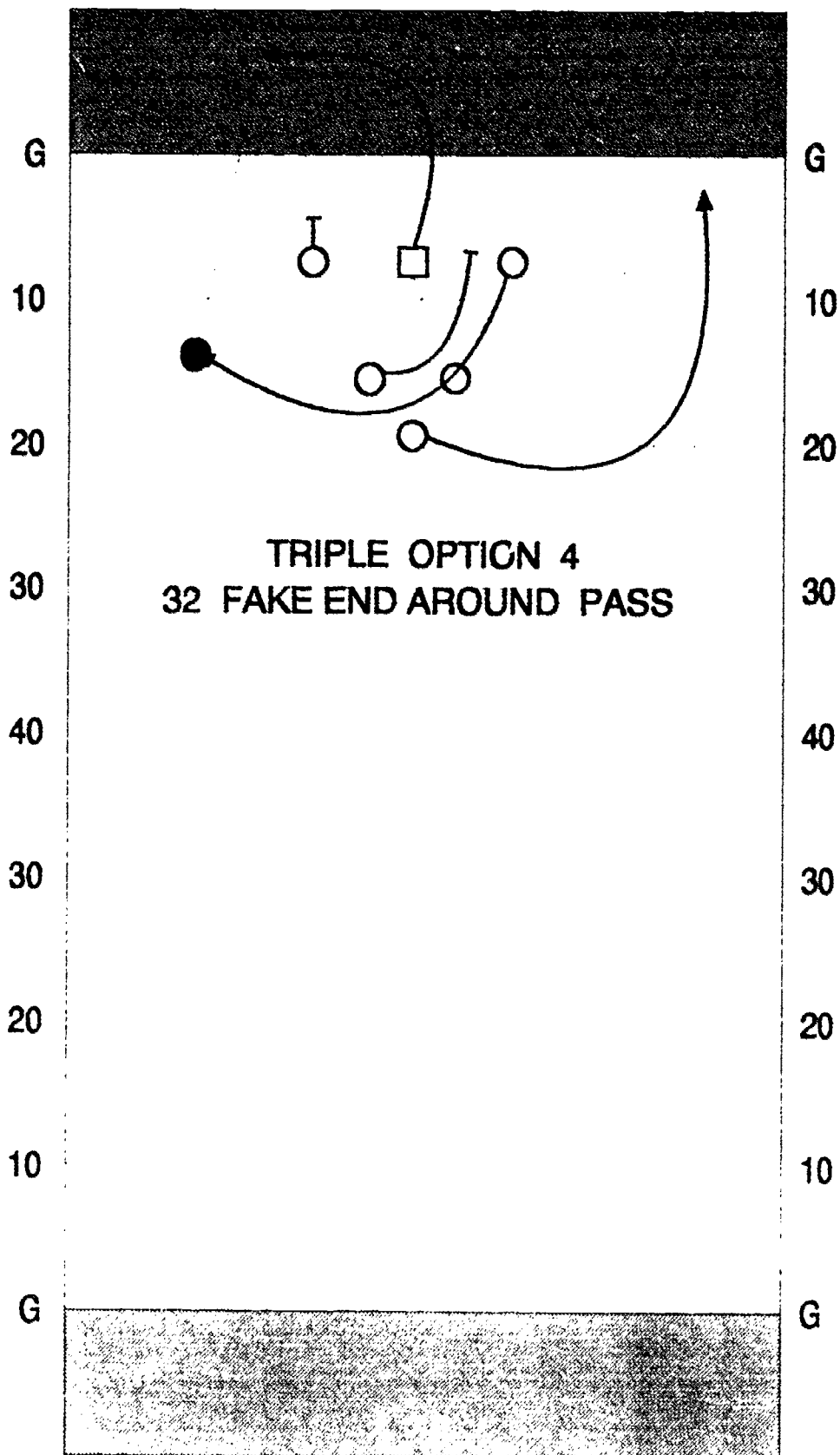


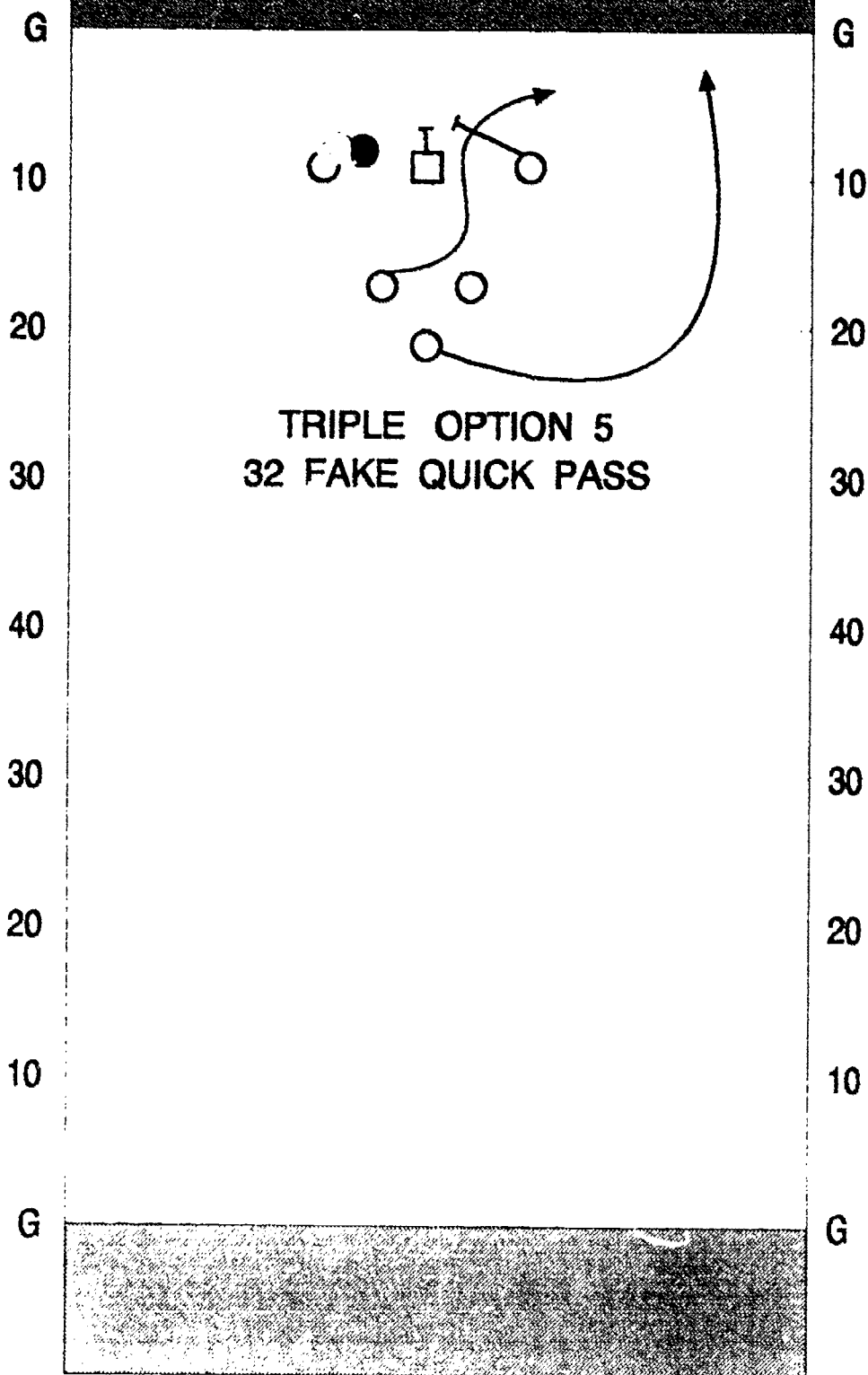




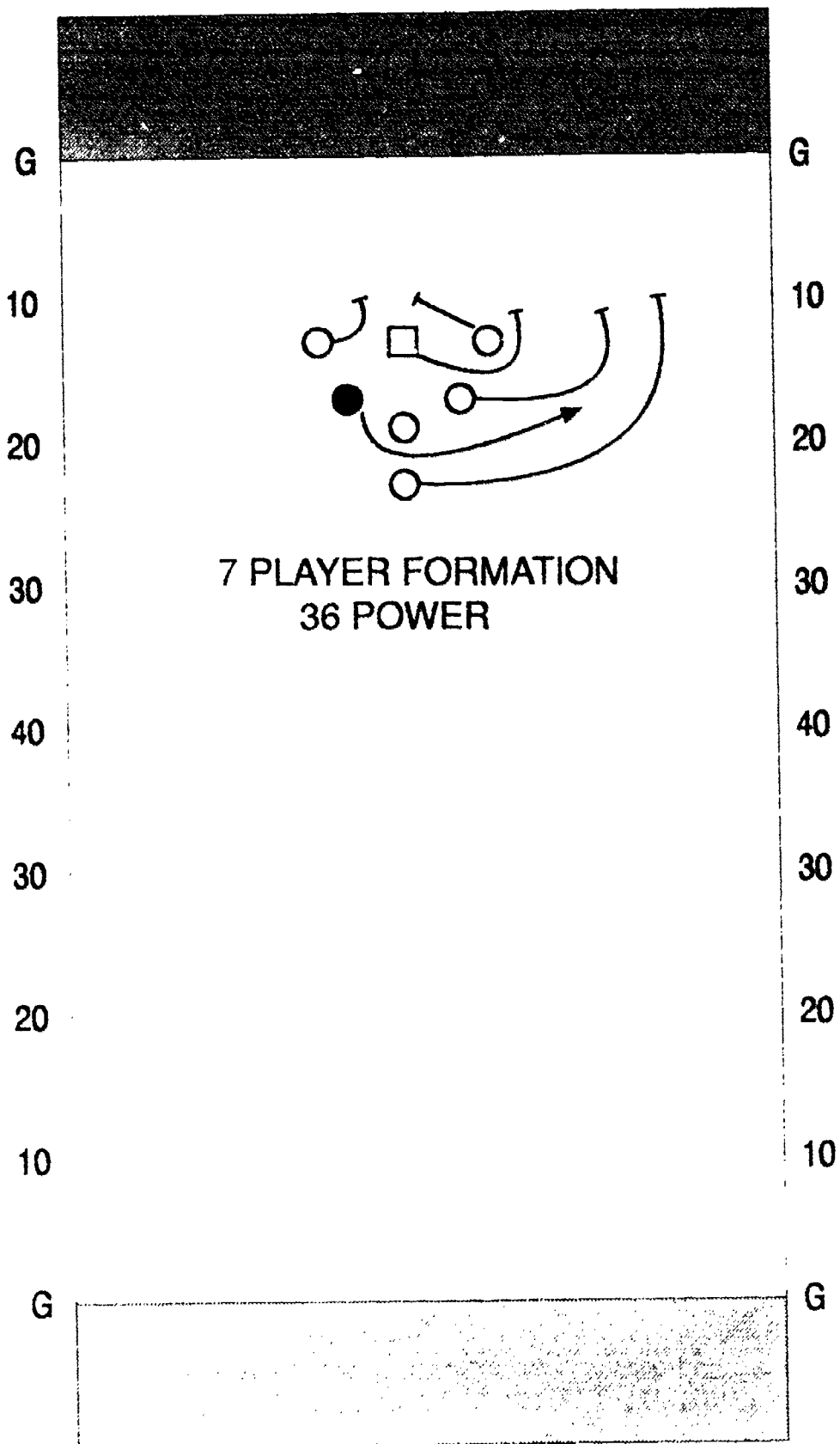


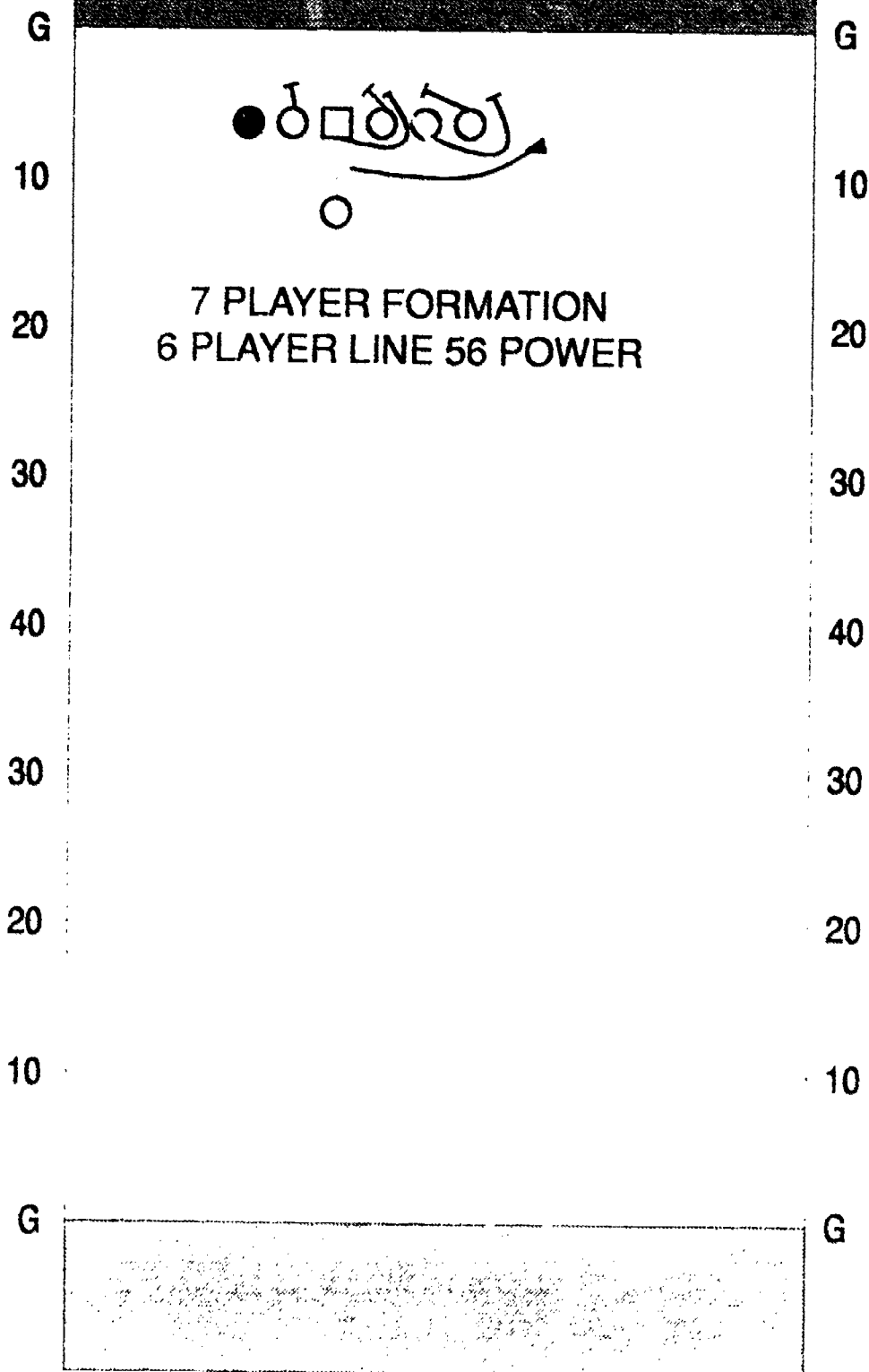
**TRIPLE OPTION 3**  
**32 FAKE PASS PITCH**

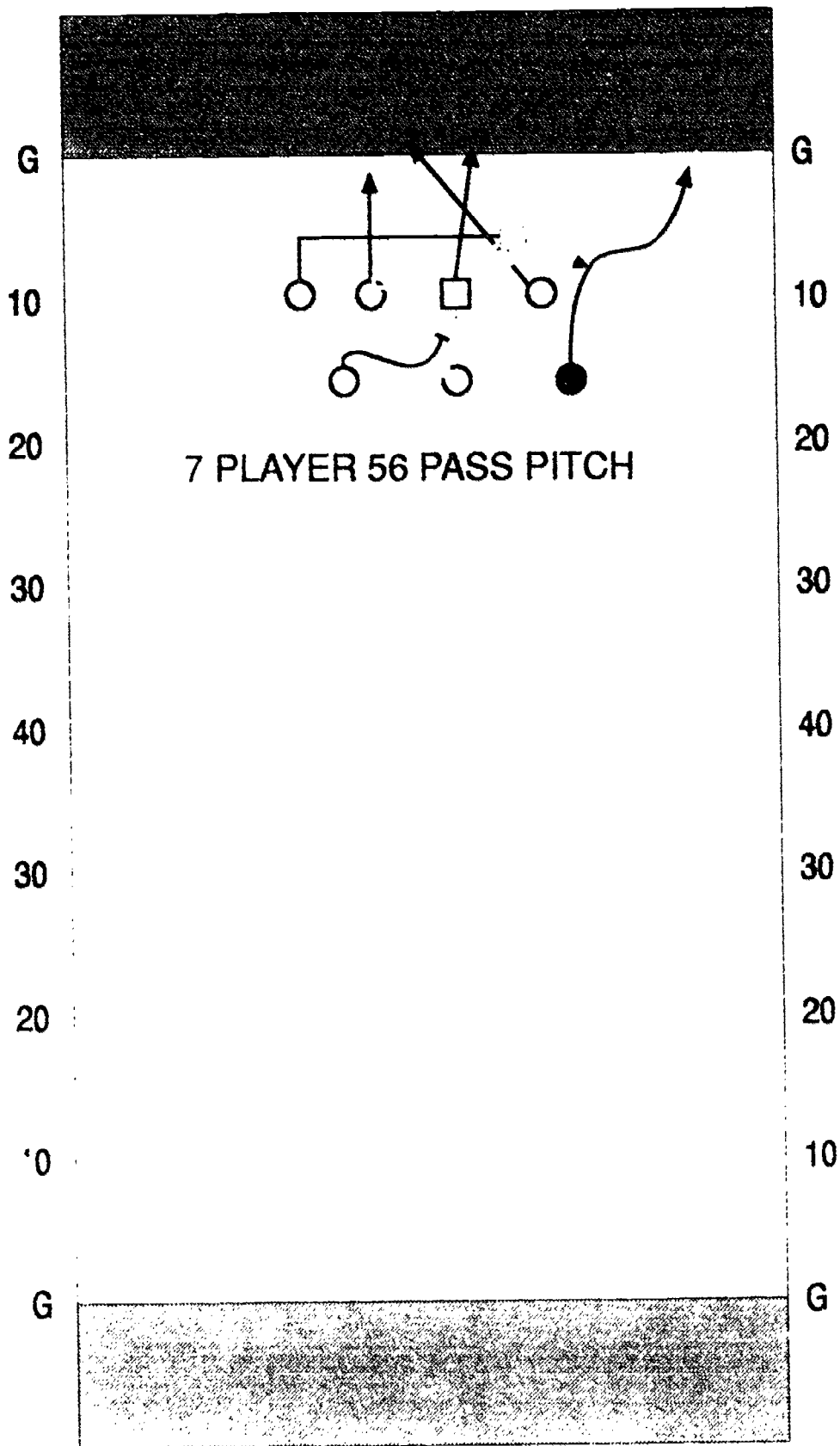


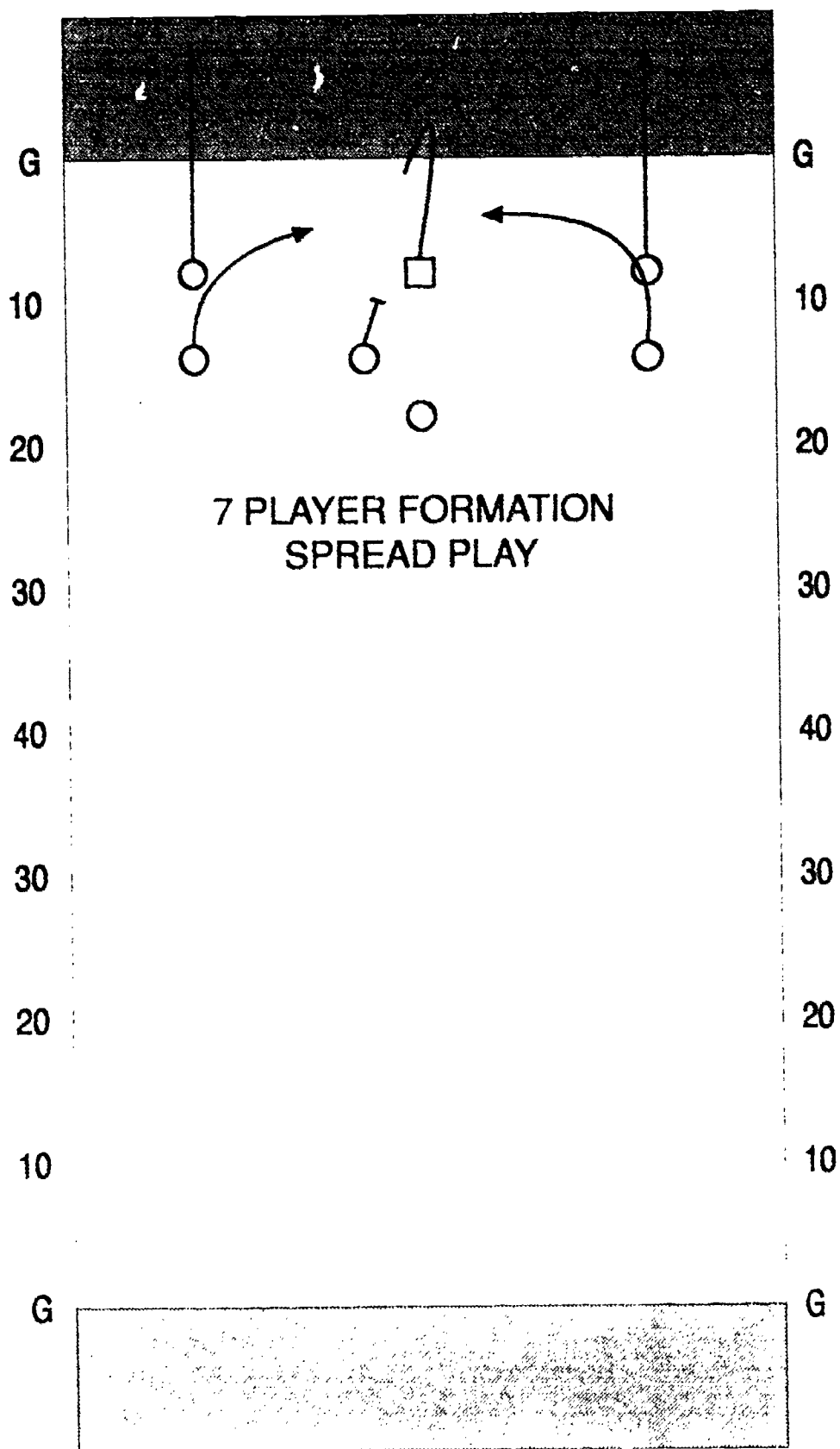


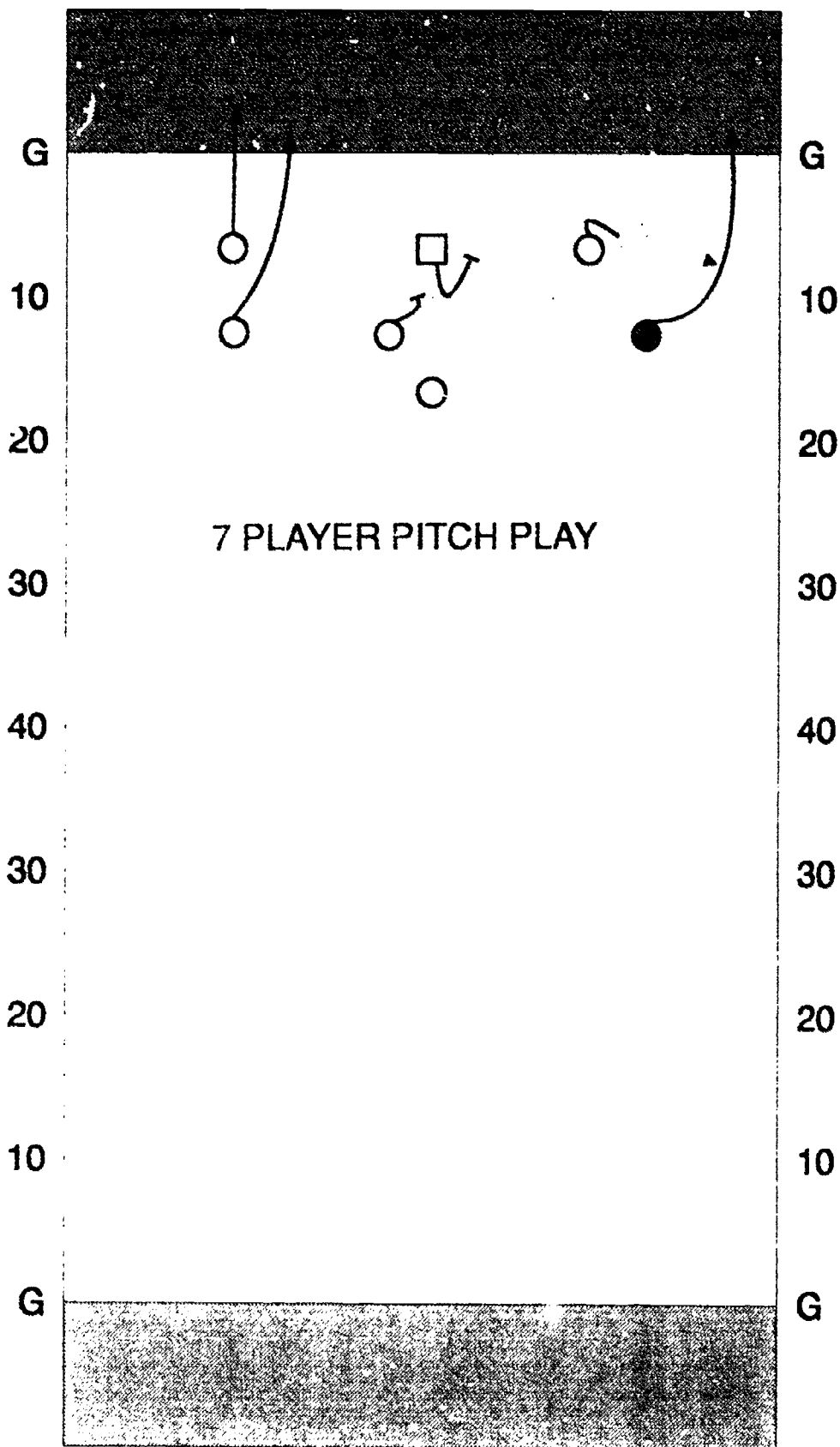


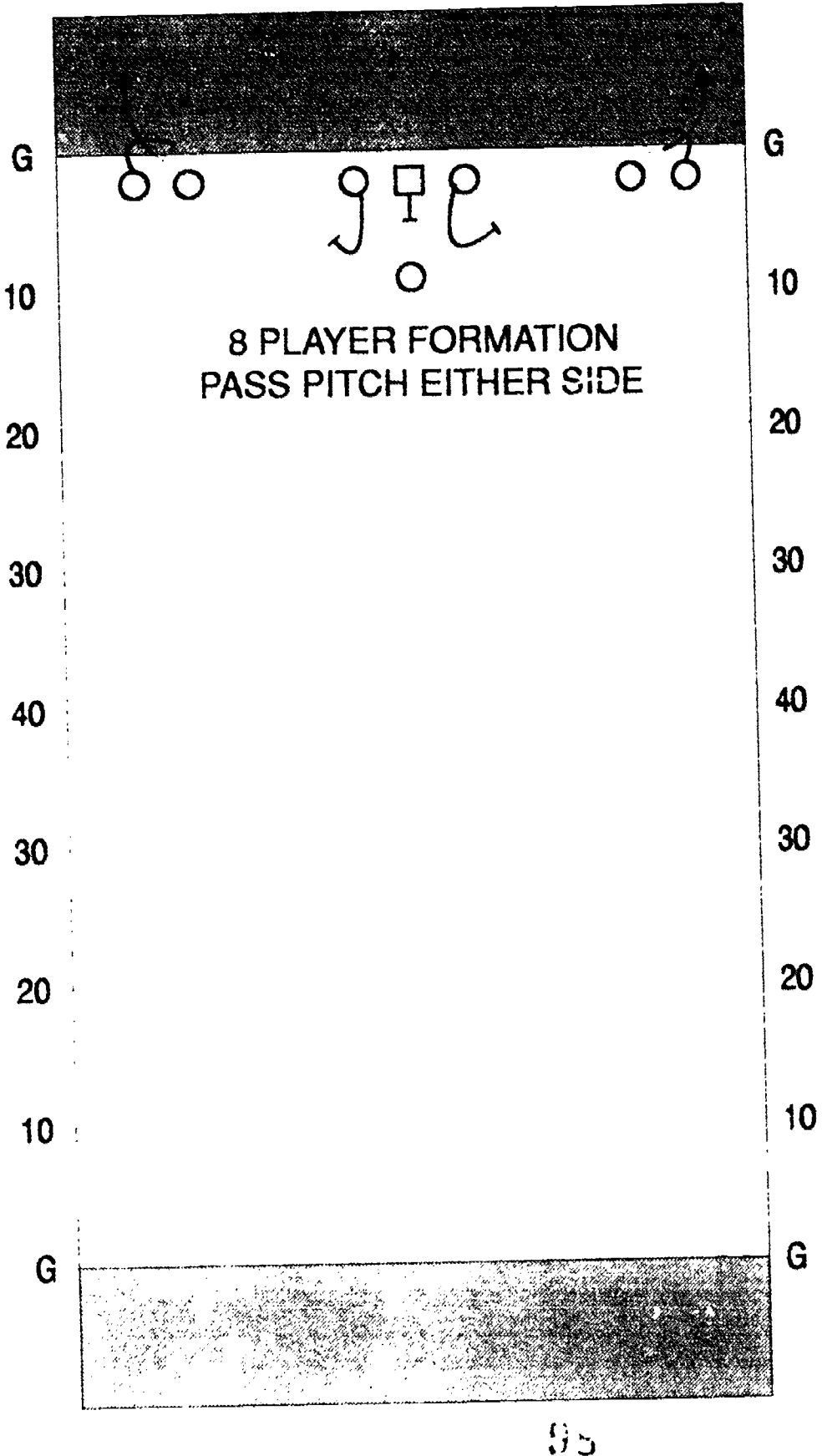


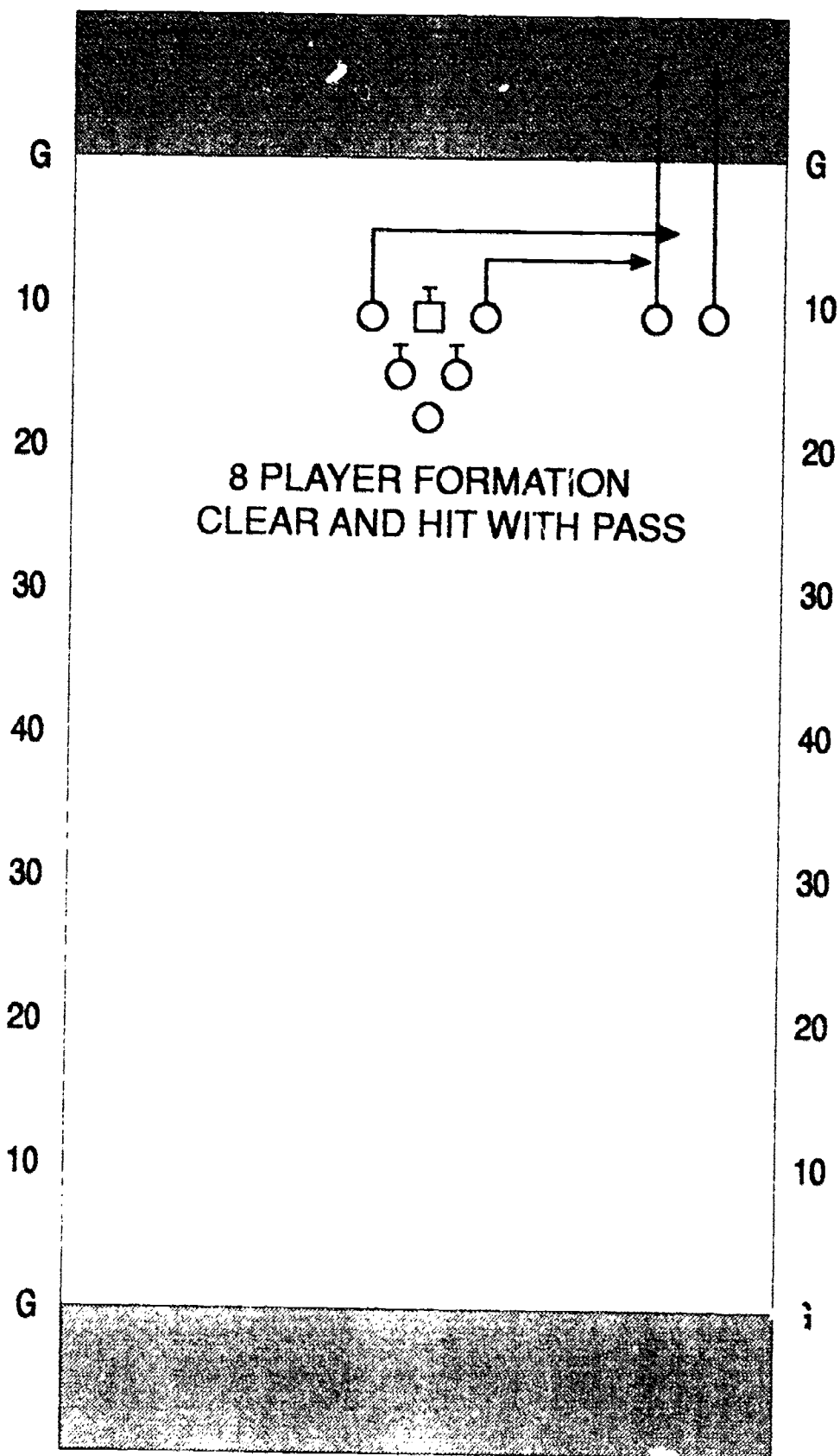


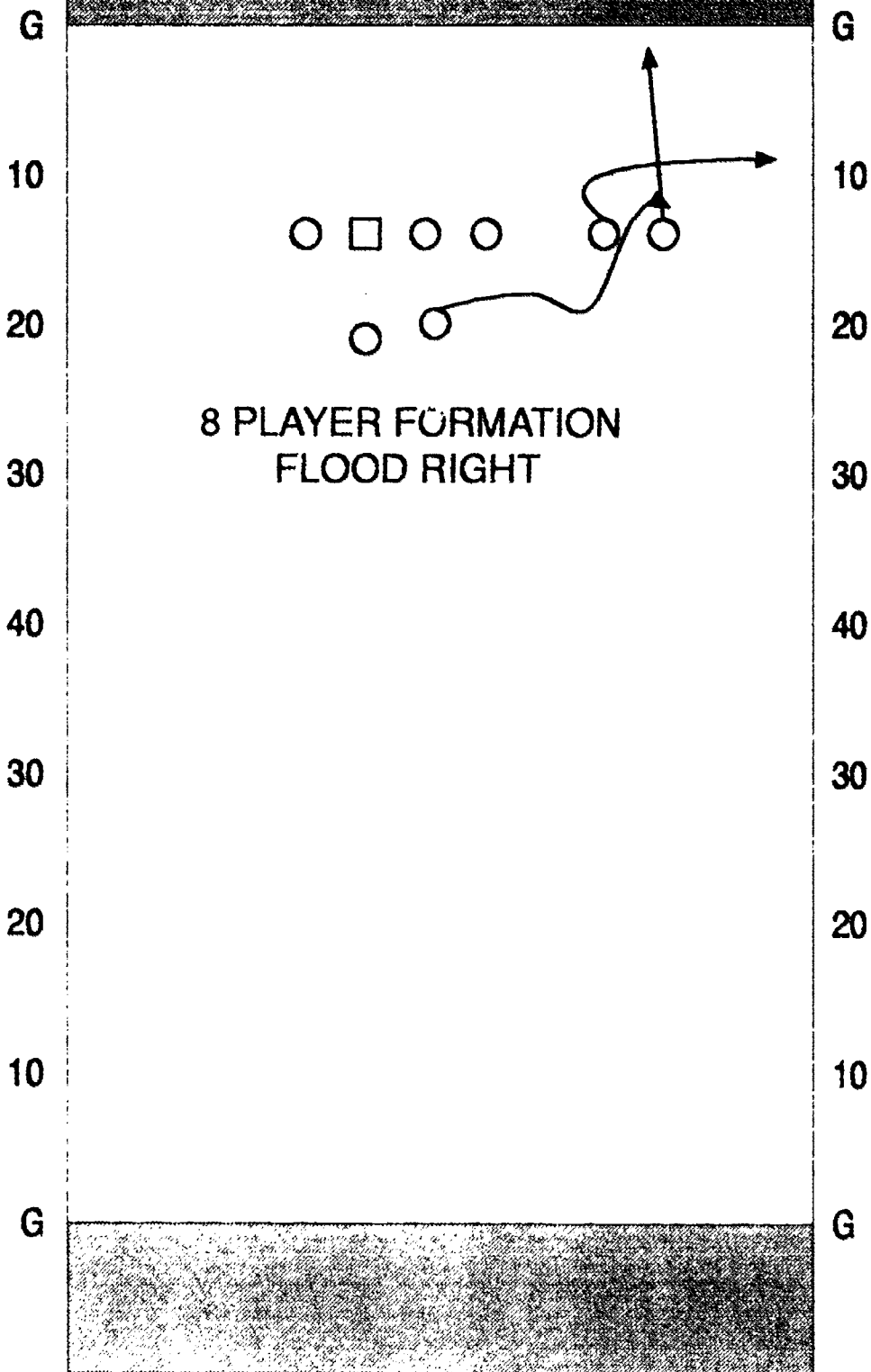












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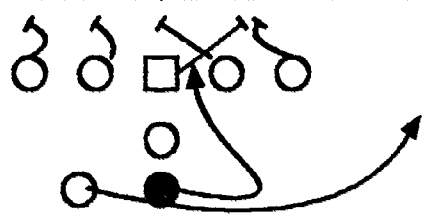
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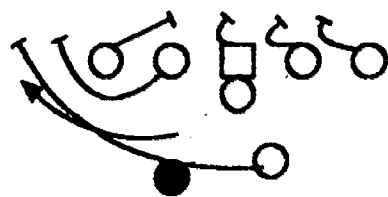
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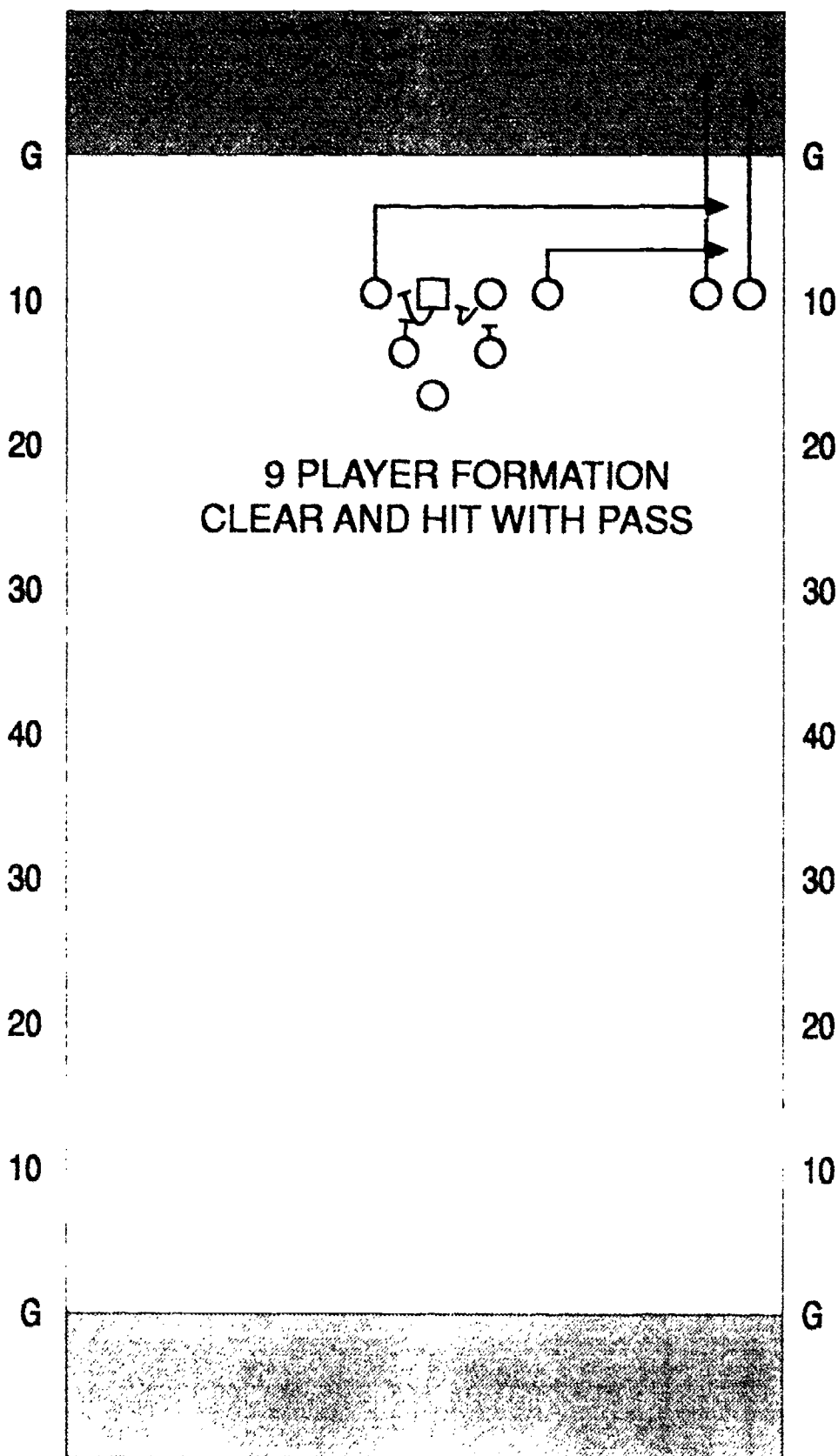
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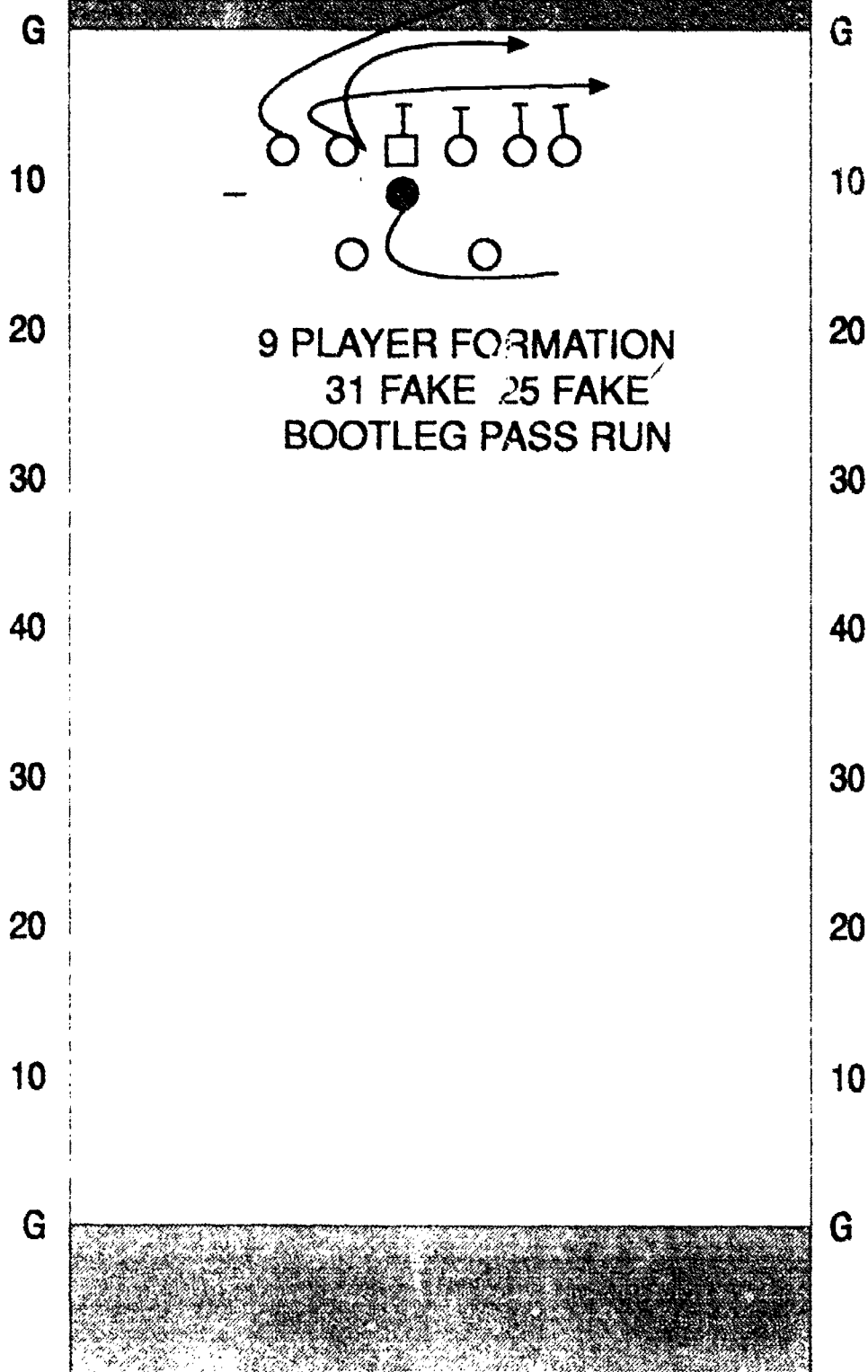
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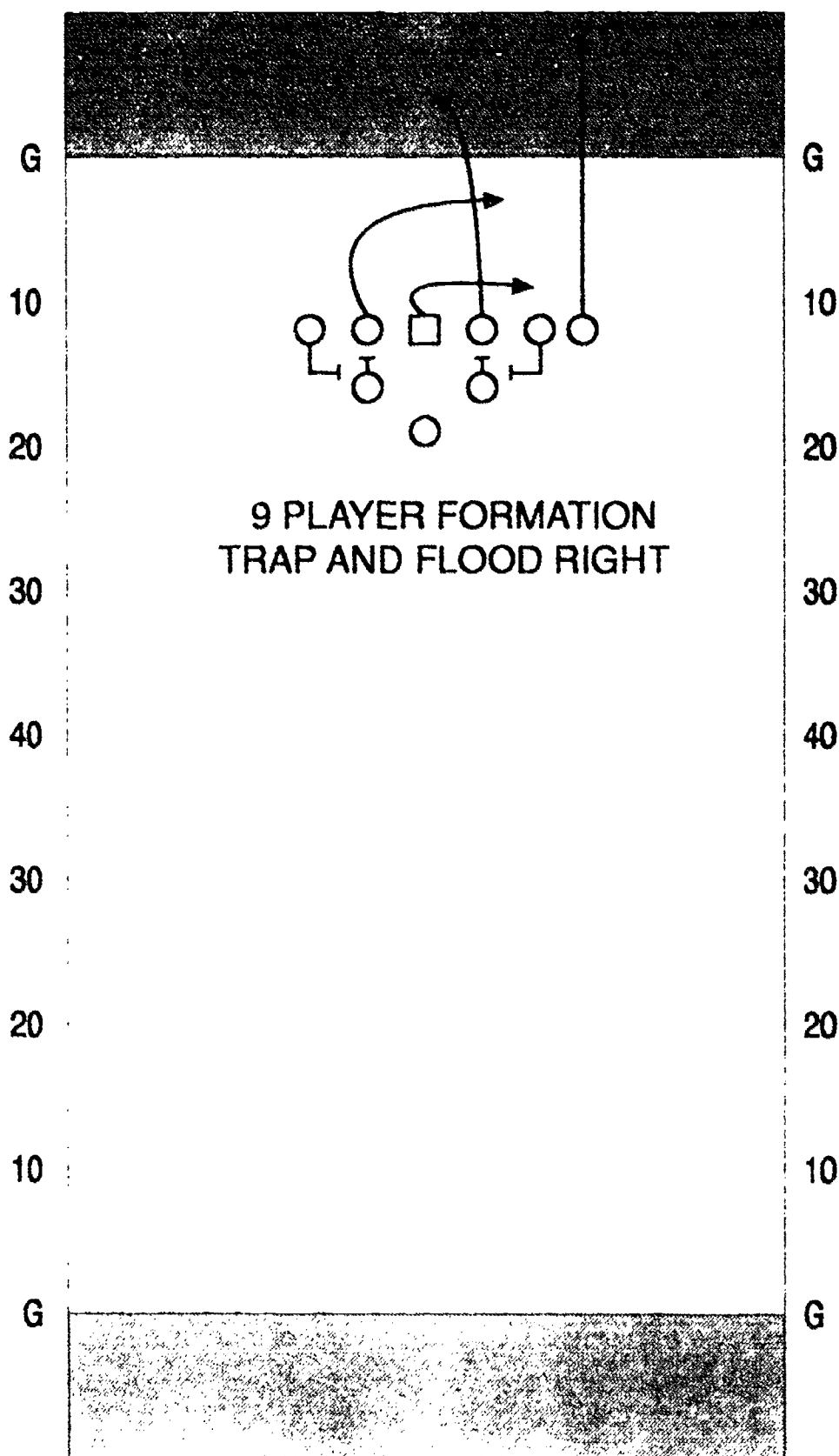
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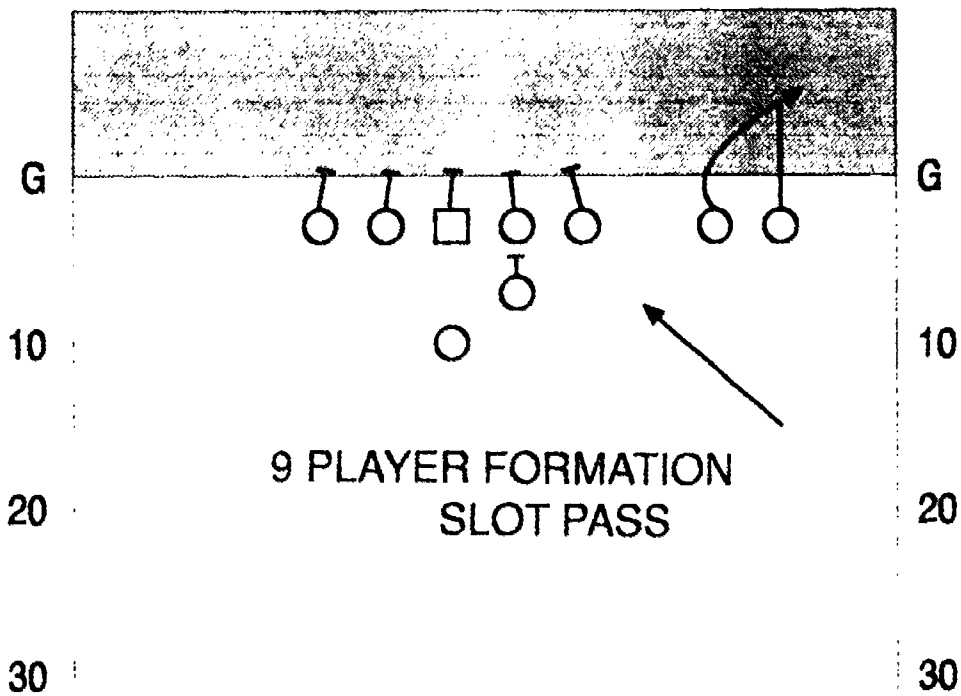
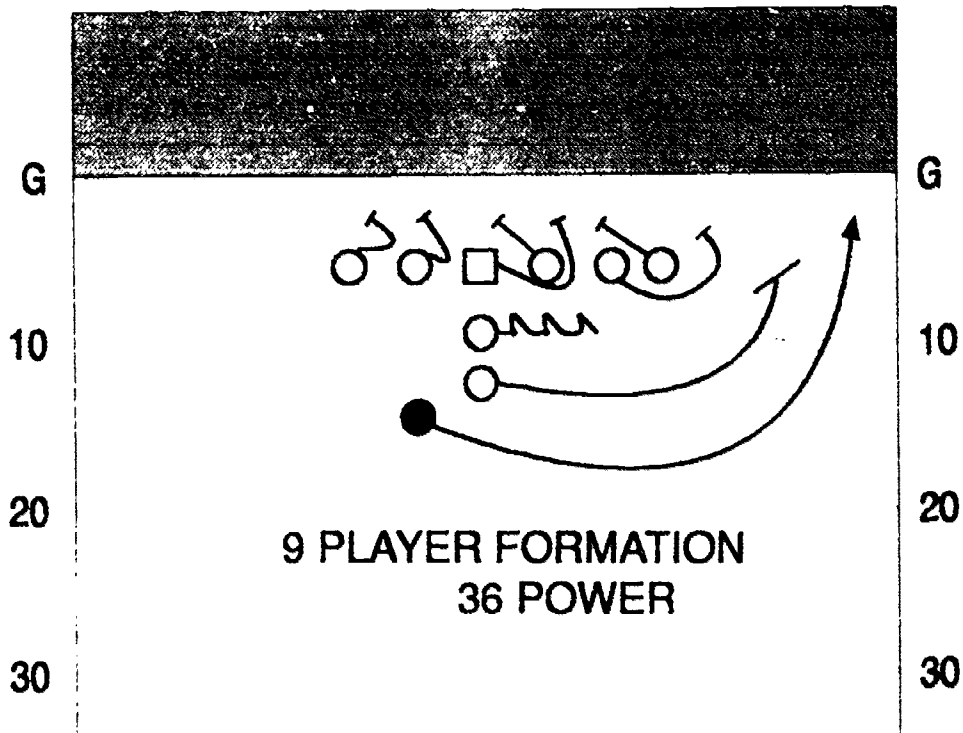
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## CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION

1. Teach numbering system for calling plays first. Give it in written form. Explain it and then walk through it on the field.
2. Next, teach the blocking assignments and how they are called. Follow the same format as numbering system to teach this skill.
3. To help players pick up this skill quicker, select 4 plays:
  - a) run up the middle.
  - b) sweep.
  - c) passing play.
  - d) pass-run option.This will help them pick up the system quicker.
4. Teach different plays and formations. Give a written test.
5. Teach the huddle, Know where, who calls it, and who talks in it.
6. After learning different formations, pick one standard to use and practice shifting out of that formation.
7. Audibles are an advanced skill. After successfully learning the above, work on the audibles. Then, changing live colors can be taught.
8. The 2 minute offense is the last offensive maneuver. Teach it with only 4 to 6 passing plays. Make sure players know how to huddle in it.

# CHAPTER 4

# DEFENSIVE

# FUNDAMENTALS



## A. DEFENSIVE LINE PLAY

### OUTLINE

- Rules for flagbelts
- Flag pulling by the defensive line
- Need for proper execution and qualifications for defensive lineman/woman
- Stance and use of hands
- Rushing techniques
- Check list for flag pull and defensive rush
- Check list for common errors in defensive line play
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression



## **RULES FOR FLAGBELTS**

Three types of flag sets available:

- a) Flag a-tag: Velcro flags that pull off individually.
- b) Ball and socket or suction cup: flags pull off individually; most difficult to pull.
- c) Triple threat one-piece flag belt: entire belt comes off; easiest to pull.

In traditional flagball and SARC rules, a flagbelt consists of a belt with 2 Velcro or ball and socket type flags. The flags hang from the hips of the runner and when one of these flags is pulled, the player is considered down.

NIRSA flagball now uses a one piece belt at the waist line with 3 flags permanently attached. One flag is on each side of the hip and one is down the center of the back. When the defensive player pulls any one of the 3 flags or the belt itself, the whole belt comes off and the player is considered down.

## **FLAG PULLING BY THE DEFENSIVE LINE**

One of the most difficult skills in flagball is flag pulling. The defensive man/woman must be sure handed, quick, and agile to be able to pull the flag. In many cases there is only one attempt! The player must make it count or it could end up in a touchdown.

When rushing, the defensive player is faced with one of two situations. One is when he/she is chasing the offensive player to pull his/her flag. The other situation is when he/she is fighting off a block and waiting for the offensive player to come to him/her. Each of the situations must be handled differently.

In situation one, in which the defensive lineman/woman is chasing the offensive player, the fundamentals to remember are:

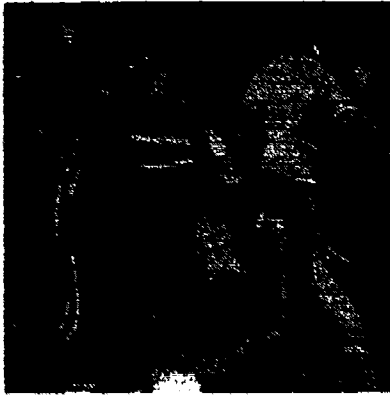
1. Keep a low center of gravity.
2. Run on the balls of your feet.
3. Watch the offensive man/woman's hips and not his/her feet or other fakes.
4. Use the wrap around method of pulling the flags to go for two flags, not just one, whenever possible. The wrap around method is defined as taking both arms and wrapping them around the offensive player (not holding). Then, pulling them around and down in a sweeping motion resulting in pulling both flags.
5. Have soft hands as you keep your target in constant sight.

**After the flags are pulled, it is a great sportsmanlike gesture to hand the flags back to the offensive player rather than throwing them on the ground or some other action.**



**In situation two, when the offensive player is coming at the defender, the fundamentals to remember are:**

- 1. Keep a low center of gravity.**
- 2. Wait for the offensive player to come to you. Do not go to him/her or he/she will fake you out (wait wait wait).**  
**Patience is one of the biggest keys to good defense. The term we use is "breaking down," letting the play break down in front of you and then step up and pull the flag.**
- 3. Keeping your eye on his/her hips lets the offensive player commit.**
- 4. Then, with soft hands and eye on your target, you use the wraparound method of flag pulling - going for two flags, not just one.**



**Situation 1: Chasing offensive player**



**Situation 2: Break down**



**Situation 3: Pulling the flag**



**Situation 4: Fighting off block**

## **DEFINING THE NEED FOR PROPER EXECUTION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEFENSIVE LINEMAN/WOMAN**

Many times players and spectators think that football is an offensive game. Actually, the defense holds the key to success or failure more often than the offense. The defense not only stops the other team from scoring, but more often than not actually scores itself in the form of an intercepted pass or a safety.

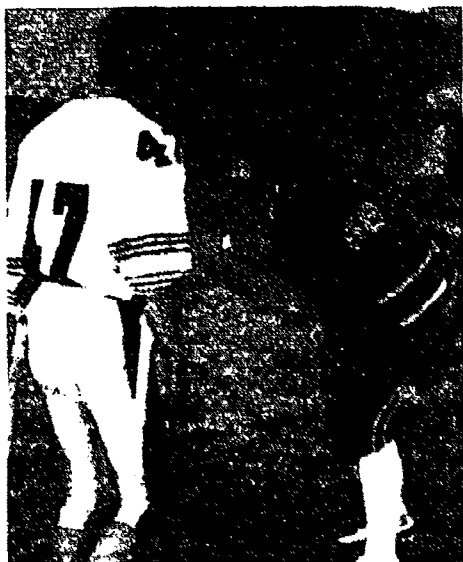
***Flagball for the '90s* STATES THAT DEFENSE IS THE NAME OF THE GAME.**

Against the run the defensive lineman/woman should depend on playing the **position**, not the player. The lineman/woman must diagnose quickly, move fast, break down, and have aggressive pursuit.

Since flagball is a passing game, the pass defense is extremely important. It is said that there is no defense for a perfectly thrown pass. Therefore, the perfectly thrown ball must be prevented by applying pressure on the quarterback with the defensive line play. Stop up the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is in the air, **DON'T FORGET IT IS A FREE BALL**. Anyone who can catch it has possession. The offense has no more right to it than the defense. **PLAY THE BALL AND NOT THE PLAYER.**

Defensive players are the biggest, strongest, most mobile, and quickest players on the team. They must have no fear and also be able to make quick decisions with equally quick reactions. These are usually the emotional players on the team.

## STANCE AND USE OF HANDS



In many flagball rules, there is no three point stance on the line of scrimmage. There is a good reason for this. With no protective head gear (helmets), injury is at a high risk. Consequently, the defensive man/woman must keep a low center of gravity and his/her feet shoulder width apart, usually with one foot staggered in front of the other on the line. Eyes are straight ahead reading the offensive plays. In most flagball rules the defensive player **MUST USE HIS/HER HANDS**, so in our text we will spend time on the correct and most efficient method of doing that.

The biggest key in playing defensive line is to **NEVER** let the offensive blocker get inside your jersey. What is meant by this is to keep arms extended to ward off and push and grasp (not hold) the blocker and so neutralize the offensive charge. The defensive lineman/woman's hands and arms are his/her greatest strength. If he/she loses these, the play is over. The following are different methods of rushing on the defensive line using your hands:

## **Execution of using hands on the defensive rush:**



**Swim techniques**

**Push and pull  
techniques**

**Spin techniques**

## **RUSHING TECHNIQUES**

1. **Swim technique** - The defensive player actually uses a swimming motion with his/her arms to move through the offensive line. The defensive player can move his/her forearm up and under the blocker's arm or may extend his/her arm and swim over the top of the blocker. Both methods are effective.
2. **Push and pull technique** - The defensive player grasps the offensive player and then either pulls him/her to the side or, if he/she is being blocked out of the play, takes the blocker with him/her with this pulling motion.
3. **Spin technique** - The rusher actually uses his/her hands and arms to spin around the blocker to get into the offensive backfield.



## CHECK LIST FOR FLAG PULL AND DEFENSIVE RUSH

### FLAG PULLING:

1. Keep feet shoulder width apart and a low center of gravity.
2. Break down and wait for the offensive player to come to you.
3. When chasing the offensive player, keep your eye on the target and have soft hands.
4. Whenever pulling flags, use the wrap around method and go for two flags.

### RUSHING:

1. Feet should be kept shoulder width apart with one foot staggered ahead of the other. Keep a low center of gravity.
2. Keep the offensive player away from you by using your arms. Use one of the following rushing techniques - swim, push and pull, or spin.
3. Diagnose and move quickly. Your job is to put pressure on the offense and to make things happen.



## CHECK LIST OF COMMON ERRORS IN DEFENSIVE LINE PLAY

### FLAG PULLING:

1. Defensive player lets offensive run by - check stance and see if flag grabber is breaking down and waiting for the offensive player to make his/her move.
2. Inadequate pressure on the quarterback - check the lineman/ women's ability to read plays.
3. If teams are sweeping the end with regularity - check whether the defensive line is pursuing the play and if the end where the play is being run is staying home.

### RUSHING:

1. If defensive player is not getting to the play early enough - check his/her speed, whether he/she has a low center of gravity, and if he/she can read the play of the offense.
2. If the defensive lineman/woman is being blocked out of the play he/she probably is not using his/her arms properly and letting the offensive player in his/her shirt.

## DRILLS

### FLAG PULL DRILLS:



Towel drill

Towel drill on back



Fighting through block

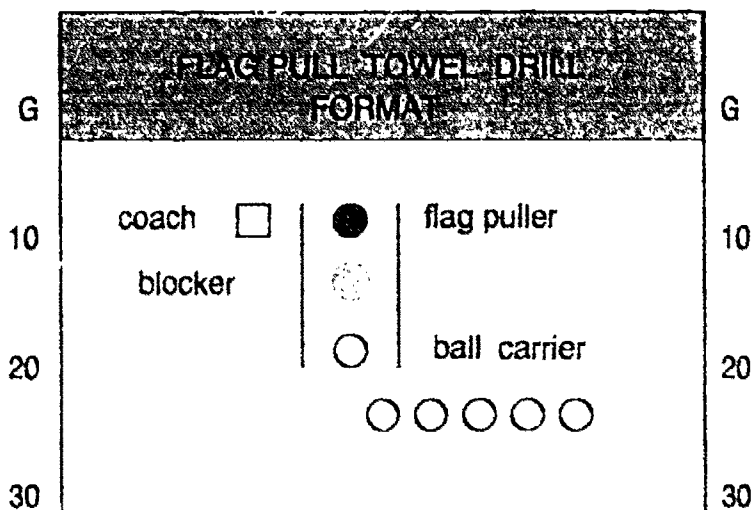
1. TOWEL DRILL  
Line players up about 5-7 yards apart with boundaries set by towels of about 3 yards wide. The coach tosses the ball to the offensive player. He/she then has to run by the defensive lineman/woman who is breaking down and waiting to pull the flag. The 3 yard boundary is important to keep the play in perspective.



2. TOWEL DRILL ON THE BACK  
Same drill as before, but put the defensive player on his/her back. As the ball is being tossed to the receiver by the coach, he/she must get up and turn and pull the flags of the offensive player.
3. TOWEL DRILL FIGHTING THROUGH THE BLOCK  
Same as the above drills, but the defensive lineman/woman must fight through a lead blocker to get to the player with the ball.

## RUSHING DRILLS

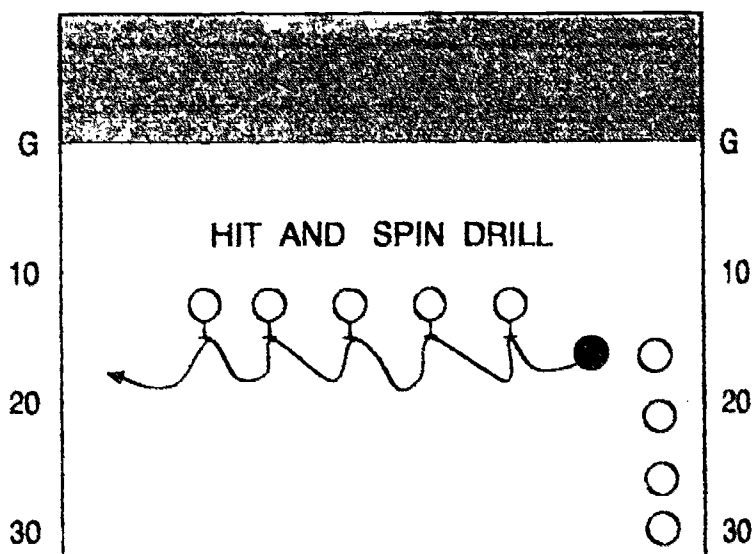
1. TOWEL DRILL  
The defensive player works on the following rushing techniques - swim, push and pull, spin while fighting the offensive player off. Walk through the drill first, then run at 3/4 speed and finally at full speed.
2. Run the above drills with a ball carrier and have time to pull the flags after using the proper rushing technique.





### 3. HIT AND SPIN DRILL

Line four or five linemen/ women up with blocking bags in a row. The defensive player must spin or push or pull by each lineman/ woman and then go after a running back doing a step around the end. This develops good rushing techniques, pursuit, and flag pulling skills.



#### CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION

1. Teach the defensive mind set.
2. Teach the proper method of pulling flags.
3. Instruct the proper stance, footwork and use of hands.
4. Go over the different techniques of rushing - swim, push and pull, and spin.
5. Teach ways to avoid being blocked by the offensive.



## **B. LINE BACKER AND DEFENSIVE BACK FUNDAMENTALS**

### **OUTLINE**

- Description of linebacker and defensive back qualifications
- Stance
- Footwork and body position
- Pursuit
- Coverage and strategy
- Talk and teamwork
- Check list for linebackers and defensive backs
- Check list for common errors in linebackers and defensive backs
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression

### **DESCRIPTION OF LINEBACKER AND DEFENSIVE BACK QUALIFICATIONS**

When selecting players to fill the positions of linebacker and defensive backs, there are certain qualities a coach needs to consider. **SPEED AND BEING ABLE TO READ THE QUARTERBACK** are the

two most important qualities. For size, the taller the better for the obvious reason of reach. Another quality that is important is the ability of the linebacker to move to his/her right or to his/her left for good lateral pursuit. It is this author's philosophy to play the best athletes in the defensive backfield. On offense the players know what the play is and how they must execute it. On defense the players don't know where the play is going, only that they are to stop it. In my opinion, it takes more athletic ability to first diagnose and then be able to react soon enough to stop or intercept the offensive play. With the disadvantage of not knowing where the play is going, it takes an athlete with more inherent skill to play on the defensive squad than the offensive side.

## **STANCE**

The basic stance for defensive backs or linebackers is key to the footwork and movement needed for effective performance. Feet should be shoulder width apart and staggered. The knees are bent and the buttocks are low, almost like the position of sitting in a chair. The arms are at the side, bent in 90 degree angles for a good running position. This is the most efficient position for backward and lateral movement.

## **FOOTWORK AND BODY POSITION**

Using the above stance, the linebacker must be able to run forward, backward, and to either side with equal mobility. Running forward is a natural movement, so will not be discussed here. Moving backward is a skill that needs to be developed. From the basic stance the defensive player uses a drop step to the right or to the left to get his/her body turned to an angle of more efficient running position. As he/she side steps backwards and diagonal he/she always keeps his/her eye on the receiver. The series of photographs on the next page illustrates the proper foot work described.



**Stance**

**Drop step**

**Running sideways**

## **PURSUIT AND ITS IMPORTANCE**

A key point that needs to be mentioned about running sideways is that the first step taken by the linebacker needs to be a crossover step that will get him/her a quicker jump on the play. Not a side shuffle, but a crossover step is used. This compares to the crossover step of the middle hitter position in volleyball. After the crossover step is taken, the linebacker can run to cover the play.

Lateral pursuit on defense is a must. In flagball the offensive series is set up on fake and misdirection plays, reverse runs, and crossing patterns. With this type of wide open game, lateral pursuit is a skill all linebackers and defensive backs need to possess. Lateral pursuit is when a middle linebacker reads the play and it is run away from him/her to the right. He/she must run across the field, holding his/her zone and make the flag pull. As he/she is pursuing he/she must always be ready for a cut back move or reverse by the offense. The footwork for this skill was described earlier. Perfection of this skill is a must on defense.

## **COVERAGE AND STRATEGY**

### **COVERING A PLAYER**

To cover a player heading straight for your position, you must **give ground**. It is essential that you keep at least 7 to 8 yards away from the oncoming player. The faster the pass receiver or the slower the defensive player, the more ground must be kept between the two.

Line up on the receiver's outside shoulder. Against a wide receiver, line up on his/her inside shoulder. Stay on this shoulder during his/her release and during his/her deceptive moves to get open. At all times keep your shoulder squared. You will have a slight forward body

lean with a low center of gravity. Keep your weight on the balls of your feet and arms pumping. Feet should be moving. Your chance of covering this player will be directly proportional to the speed with which you move your feet.

When the receiver breaks, take an angle that will take you through the receiver's **FARTHEST** shoulder. **Never go through his/her near shoulder.** To do so will cause you to lose him/her after about two steps. Do not look for the ball until you have taken your proper angle (drop step), and until you have run the foot race to get your proper position on the receiver. **LOOK FOR THE BALL WHEN THE RECEIVER LOOKS FOR THE BALL.**



If the defensive back is able to stay within 3-5 yards of the offensive player, his/her chances of defending against the pass are very good.

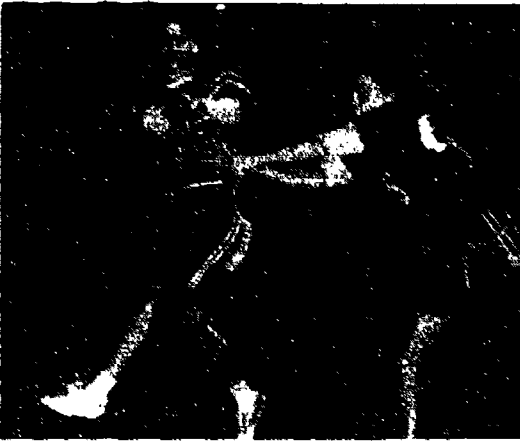
### INTERCEPTING THE BALL

If proper position is maintained as described above, the pass defender will be in an excellent position to intercept the ball. Once the pass defender determines exactly where the ball is going to come down, he/she should ignore the receiver and concentrate on intercepting the ball on anything but a perfectly thrown pass. Proceed directly to the spot where the ball is to come down and take the ball on the dead run as high as possible. **Remember, if you are going forward to meet the ball, it will hit your hands with considerable force. SOFT ALL OVER IS THE KEY. BRING THE BALL INTO YOU.**

### KNOCKING DOWN THE BALL

Whenever the possibility arises in which the pass receiver is in a good position to receive the ball, the primary task of the defender is to knock the ball down to the ground. Although a perfect pass is difficult to defend, the correct approach by the defensive player will greatly reduce touchdown possibilities. It will often cause the receiver to lose possession of the ball.





The defensive player who has correct position will be moving toward the offensive player. He/she should drive both hands directly at the football in order to force the ball down to the ground. Remember, you must play the ball. Each player should have equal opportunity to catch the ball. In most flagball rules you cannot play through the player to get to the ball.

## TALK AND TEAMWORK

Communication is the key to any good defense. The players must let the rest of the team know what they are doing and who they are covering. This needs to be done before the snap, at the snap, and after the snap during the play.

Talking in zone coverage is important in case flooding of zone occurs. In player-to-player defense, communication is vital if a player gets beat or falls down and needs help. A good defensive team is one that talks and works together like a well fitting glove on the hand. Every player does his/her job and has confidence that everyone else is doing theirs. Much practice time needs to be spent on this teamwork concept to develop the caliber of play expected and desired.



## CHECK LIST FOR LINEBACKERS AND DEFENSIVE BACKS

1. Stance has a low center of gravity with good body balance and footwork.
2. Footwork must be rapid. Good backward movement initiated by a drop step is the key.
3. Pursuit of the play needs to be constantly taught. A player must have the quickness and speed to cover the field.
4. When covering the offensive player, the defensive back lines up 7-8 yards away, on the receiver's outside shoulder for tight receiver and on the outside shoulder for a wide receiver.
5. When the receiver breaks, always take an angle that will take you through the receiver's farthest shoulder.
6. Look for the ball when the receiver looks for the ball.
7. To intercept the ball, jump forward to meet it. Remember—the ball will hit your hands with considerable force.
8. If the possibility arises in which you cannot intercept the ball, the next job is to knock it down.
9. Remember, you cannot play through the player in flagball.
10. Communication among the defensive players is the key to successful defense.



## CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN LINEBACKERS AND DEFENSIVE BACKS

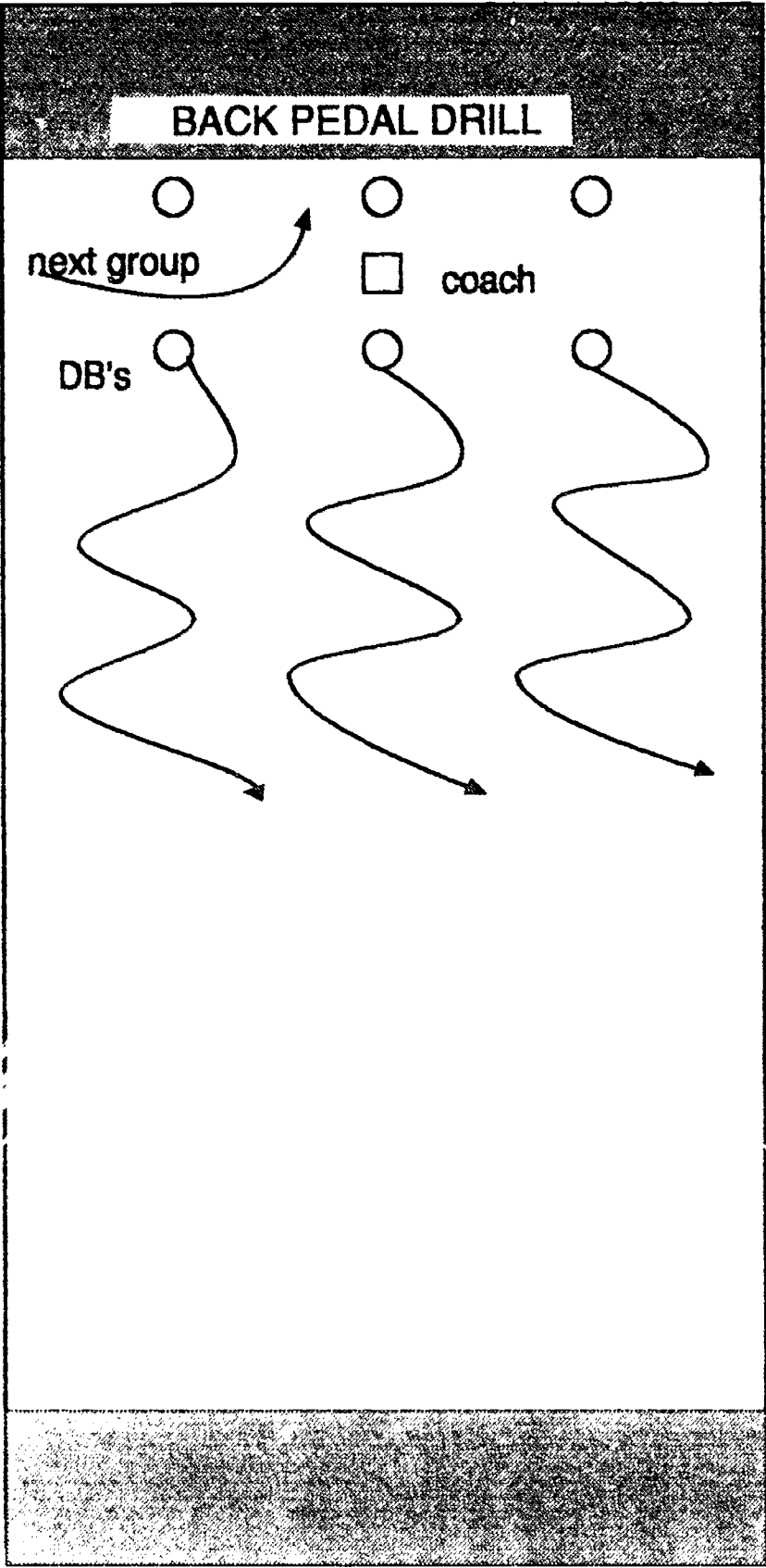
1. If the offense is successful on end sweeps-check the lateral pursuit of linebackers and defensive backs.
2. If defensive backs are getting beat deep - check their drop step and defensive coverage footwork.
3. If you are getting beat on the outside - check to see where the defensive back is lining up. Is it on the outside shoulder?
4. If interceptions are not coming - check the readability of your defense and their footwork.
5. If players are getting crossed up on their positions - talk about defense and teamwork.

## DRILLS

### 1. BACKPEDAL DRILL

Line players up 7-10 yards apart facing the coach. Assume the defensive position. The coach points in one direction and then the other as the players work on staying low, good drop steps, and footwork skills.







2. ASKI DRILL

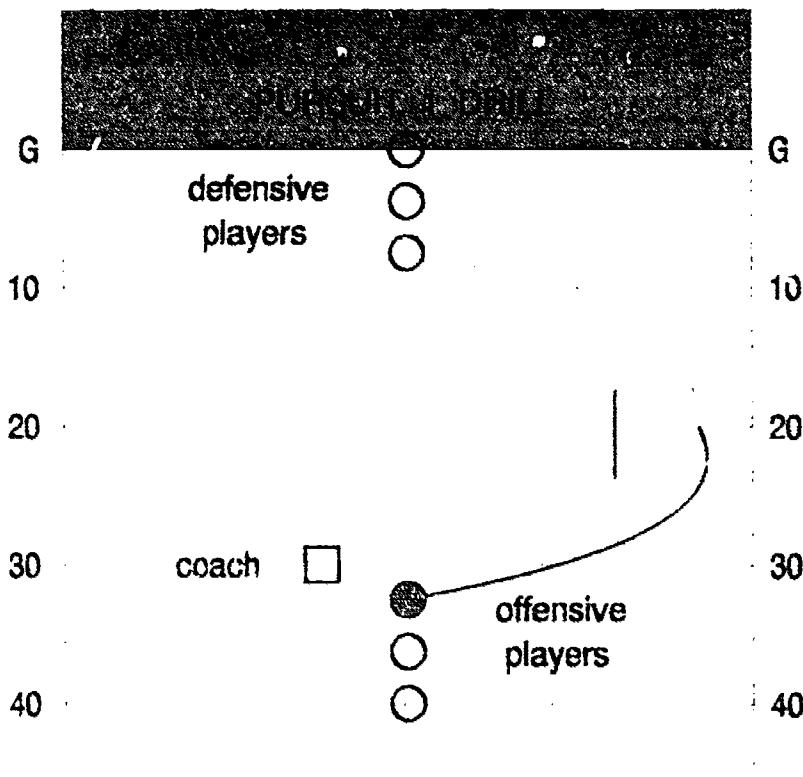
Players line up one at a time and face the coach as he/she points out the direction of the play. He/she points left or right. If ball is held high, it is a pass. If held low, it is a run. The defensive player calls out the play - run or pass - as the drill is run. After the defensive player has run up, back, right, and then left many times, the coach throws the ball for the defensive back to intercept and yells out "aski". He/she then goes back to the end of the line as the next defensive player takes his/her position.

3. TIP DRILL

This drill was explained earlier in Chapter 2 and is run the same way for defensive backs and linebackers.

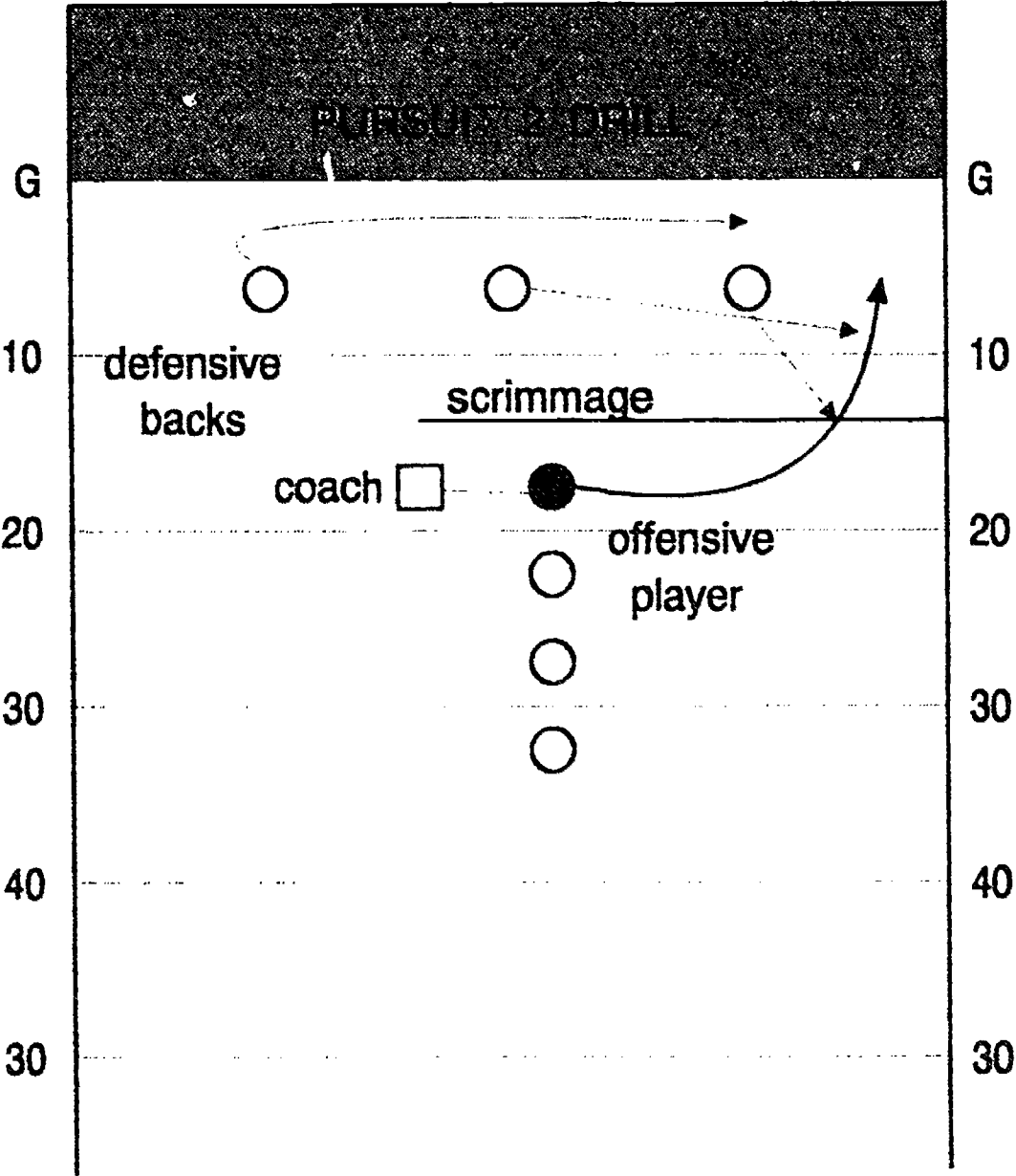
4. PURSUIT 1 DRILL

Line players up in one line with towels on sideline and 10 yards in. The other line of players is just the opposite. Each group is 15 yards deep from the line of scrimmage. The coach tosses the ball to the first player in the one line as the first player in the defensive line tries to beat the offensive player to the line of scrimmage for the cut. The offensive player cannot cut until he/she gets to the towels. The defensive player tries to beat him/her, then breaks down and pulls both flags.

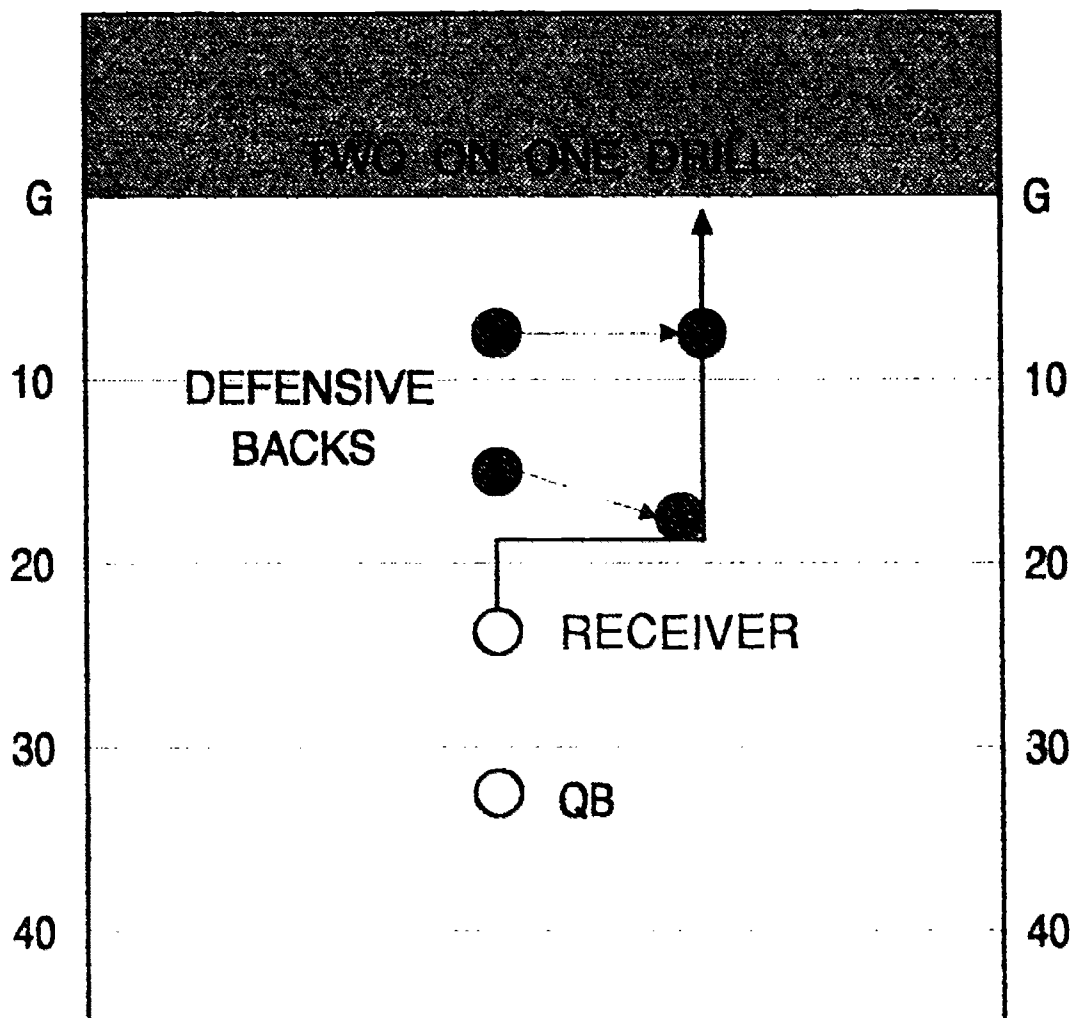


5. **PURSUIT 2 DRILL**

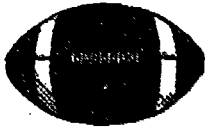
Line up three defensive backs across the field and have one line of offensive players in the middle of the field. The coach tosses the ball to the offensive player and the pursuit drill is started. The first defensive back is to come up quickly and break down on the play. The second defensive back is to pursue the play, but not overrun it. The third defensive back must pursue across the field and stop the play.



6. **TWO ON ONE DRILL**  
Two defensive backs cover one offensive player. Work on communication, short and long coverage, and crossing.



7. **TWO ON TWO DEFENSIVE DRILL**  
This works on player-to-player coverage or zone with an emphasis on communication. All defensive fundamentals are used in this game-like drill.
8. **FLAG PULLING**  
All the flag pulling drills mentioned earlier for defensive linemen are used for the linebackers and defensive backs.



## **CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION**

- 1. Define linebacker and defensive back qualifications.**
- 2. Begin with stance, footwork, and body position.**
- 3. Instruct, demonstrate, and drill players on pursuit.**
- 4. Explain defensive back coverage, man, and zone.**
- 5. Drill individuals and team in the above mentioned skills.**
- 6. Teach players how to intercept and knock down the ball.**
- 7. Teach team talk and emphasize the difference it can make.**

# CHAPTER 5

## TEAM DEFENSE



### OUTLINE

- Introduction to team defense
- Defensive team theory
- Formations - 6-player, 7-player, 8-player, and 9-player
- Explanation of player-to-player, zone, and combination defense
- Defensive huddle and signals
- Check list for team defense
- Check list for common errors in team defense
- Drills
- Check list for learning progression of team defense

### INTRODUCTION TO TEAM DEFENSE

Defense is the name of the game. Many fans and coaches like to see great offenses with trick plays and high scoring, but the way flagball games are won is by great defense. The offense knows where it is going, but the defense has to try to read and guess the play. The athletes who play the defensive game are going on raw talent to stay in the play. That is why the best athletes are put on the defensive squad. They do not know where the play is going, but are expected to be there and stop it from working. Defense is a position that needs to be valued by the

athletes. When players appreciate its importance, they can strive to become excellent defensive players.

## **DEFENSIVE TEAM THEORY**

The theory I would like to propose is that defense does not only stop the opponent from scoring, but can also score in and of itself. Defense can be an offensive weapon of a team if the following attitudes are present:

1. The team must have the desire to stop the opponent. This takes a high level of team spirit and commitment to make it a reality.
2. Players must have sound fundamentals. When each player can execute the fundamentals, the team works together based on the trust and confidence they have in each other's skills.
3. The coach must place his/her personnel in the proper positions to be effective. Available talent must be utilized to the utmost.
4. Opposition is given many different looks and defensive maneuvers.

If these principles are followed, the defensive team will make a difference.

### **KEY POINTS TO TEAM DEFENSE:**

#### **A. AGAINST THE RUN:**

The defense against the running game is dependent upon playing the "POSITION," not the player. Diagnosing quickly, moving fast, and having aggressive pursuit are important.

#### **B. AGAINST THE PASS:**

Since flag football is a passing game, the pass defense is extremely important. It is said that there is no defense for a perfectly thrown ball. Therefore, the perfectly thrown pass must be prevented by applying pressure on the quarterback. Another effective way is to stop the receiver before he/she goes out for a pass. Jam the receiver at the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is in the air **DON'T FORGET - IT IS A FREE BALL. ANYONE WHO CAN** catch it can have it. The offense has no more right to the ball than the defense, so play the ball and not the player.

## **C. POSITIONS:**

### **ENDS:**

1. Never let a player get outside your position whether he/she has the ball or not.
2. First move is to box in the backfield, then diagnose.
3. Responsible for screens and other passes behind the line and also reverse plays.
4. Turn the play in on running plays to your side so the linebackers can do their job.
5. Pursue fast on running plays to the opposite side.
6. Hardest position to play is the defensive end position.

### **INTERIOR LINEMEN/WOMEN:**

1. Pressure, Pressure, Pressure!
2. Job is not to diagnose, but to charge into the backfield with the snap of the ball. Go for the quarterback. Beat them with quickness.
3. Use your hands. Don't try to use your shoulder or try to run over opponent. Push him/her to the side. Your job is to get the quarterback's flag. The more time you waste butting shoulders with the offense, the more time the quarterback has to get rid of the ball.
4. **MOVE AROUND ON THE LINE.** Keep the offensive team guessing. Communicate with your teammates on what you see.

### **LINEBACKERS:**

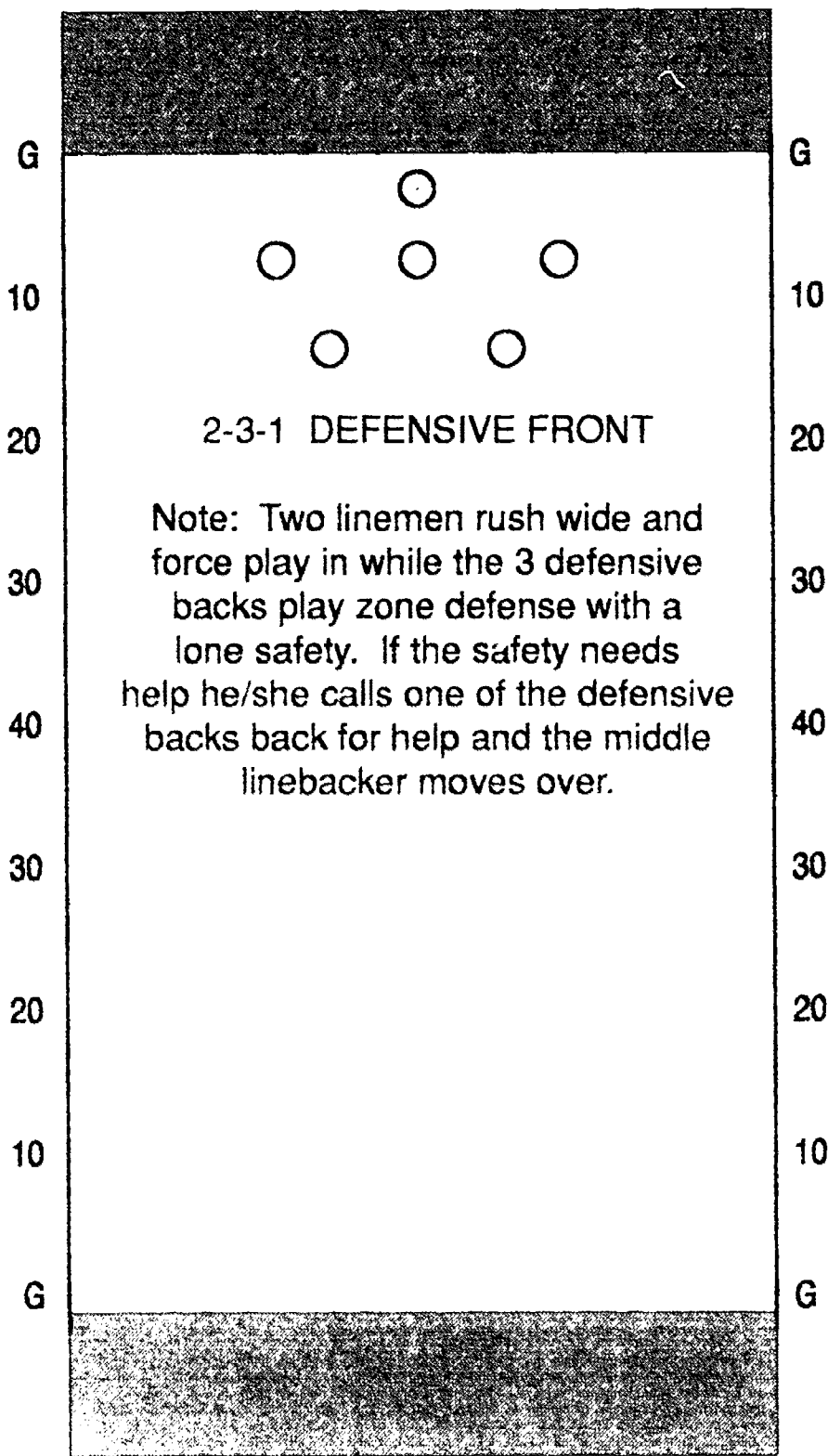
1. Job is to **DIAGNOSE**, then move.
2. Don't get faked out of position. You have a zone to cover, don't leave it. Tell your teammates what you see. **YELL OUT** "pass," "reverse," etc.
3. Watch the runs up the middle and the quick look-ins to the ends. Anything over the middle is your responsibility. Pursue, pursue, pursue.

### **DEFENSIVE BACKS AND SAFETY:**

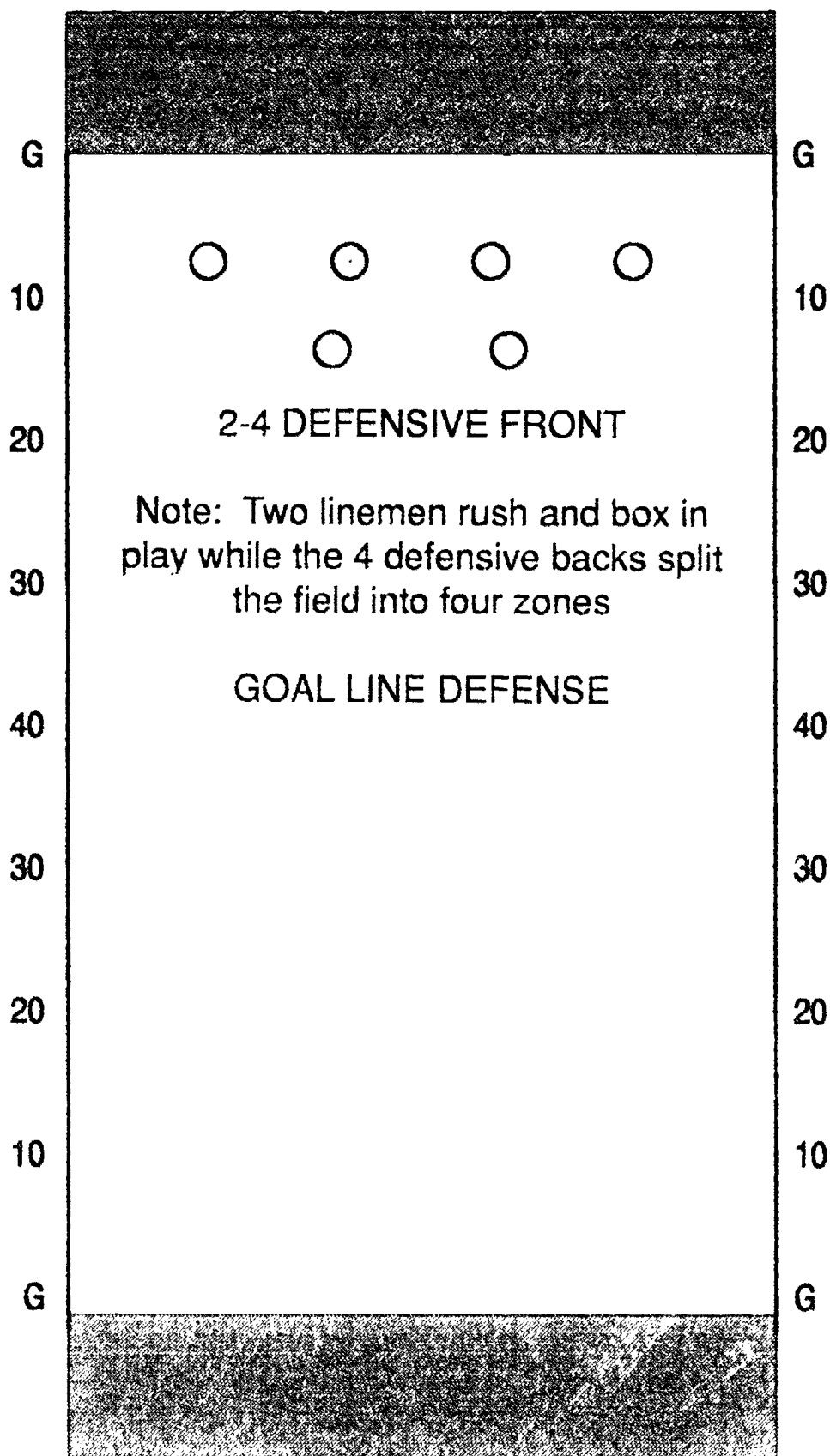
1. Must **DIAGNOSE**, then **MOVE QUICKLY**.
2. **NEVER** let an offensive player behind you. It is a sure six points for the opposition.
3. Keep your player in front of you in a player-to-player defense. If you can, try to cut in front of him/her and intercept.
4. Remember to stay in your zone in a zone pass defense. It grows wider and longer as the play develops.

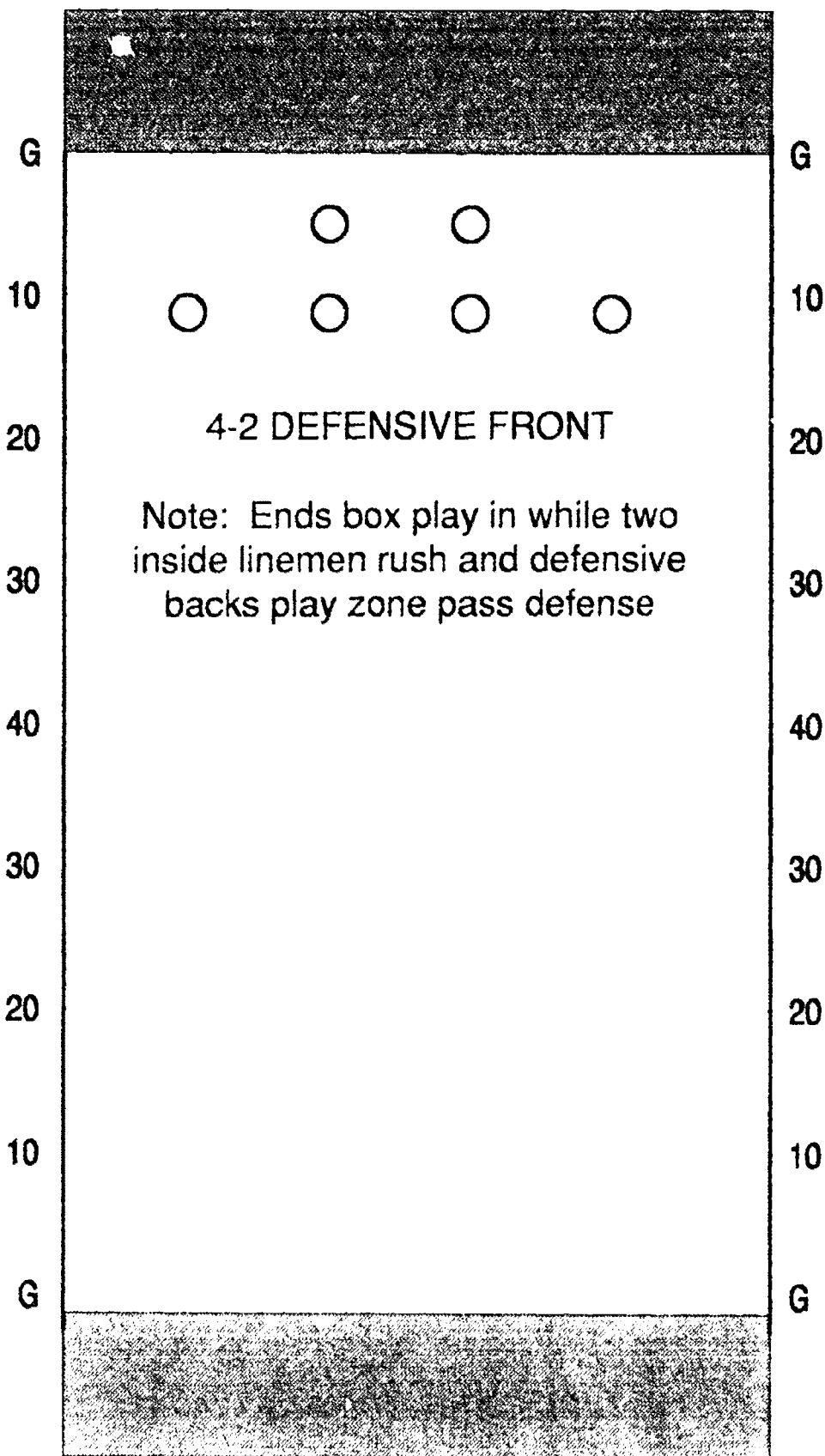
**PLAY THE BALL, NOT THE PLAYER**

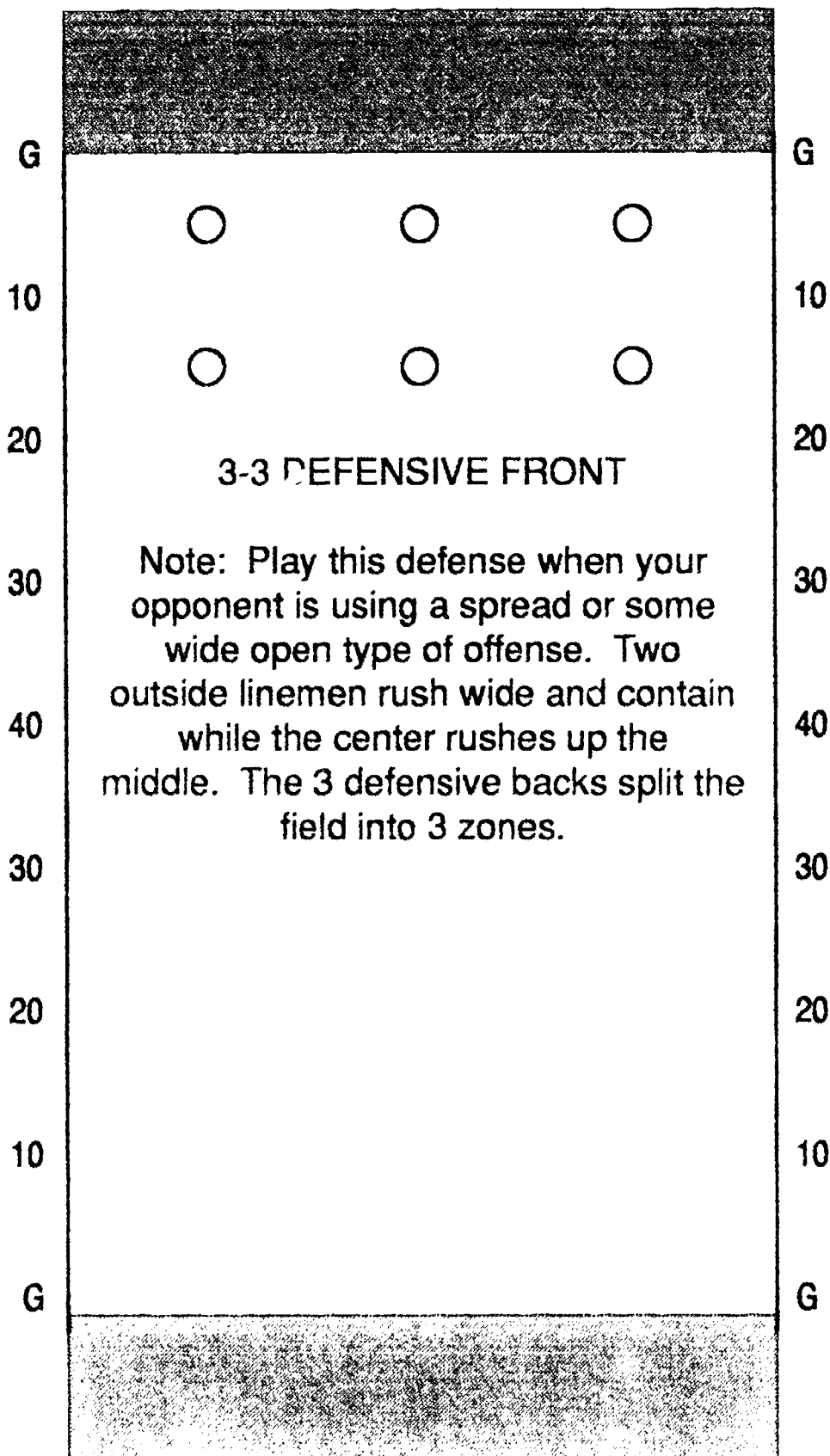
**FORMATIONS: 6-PLAYER, 7-PLAYER, 8-PLAYER, AND 9-PLAYER**

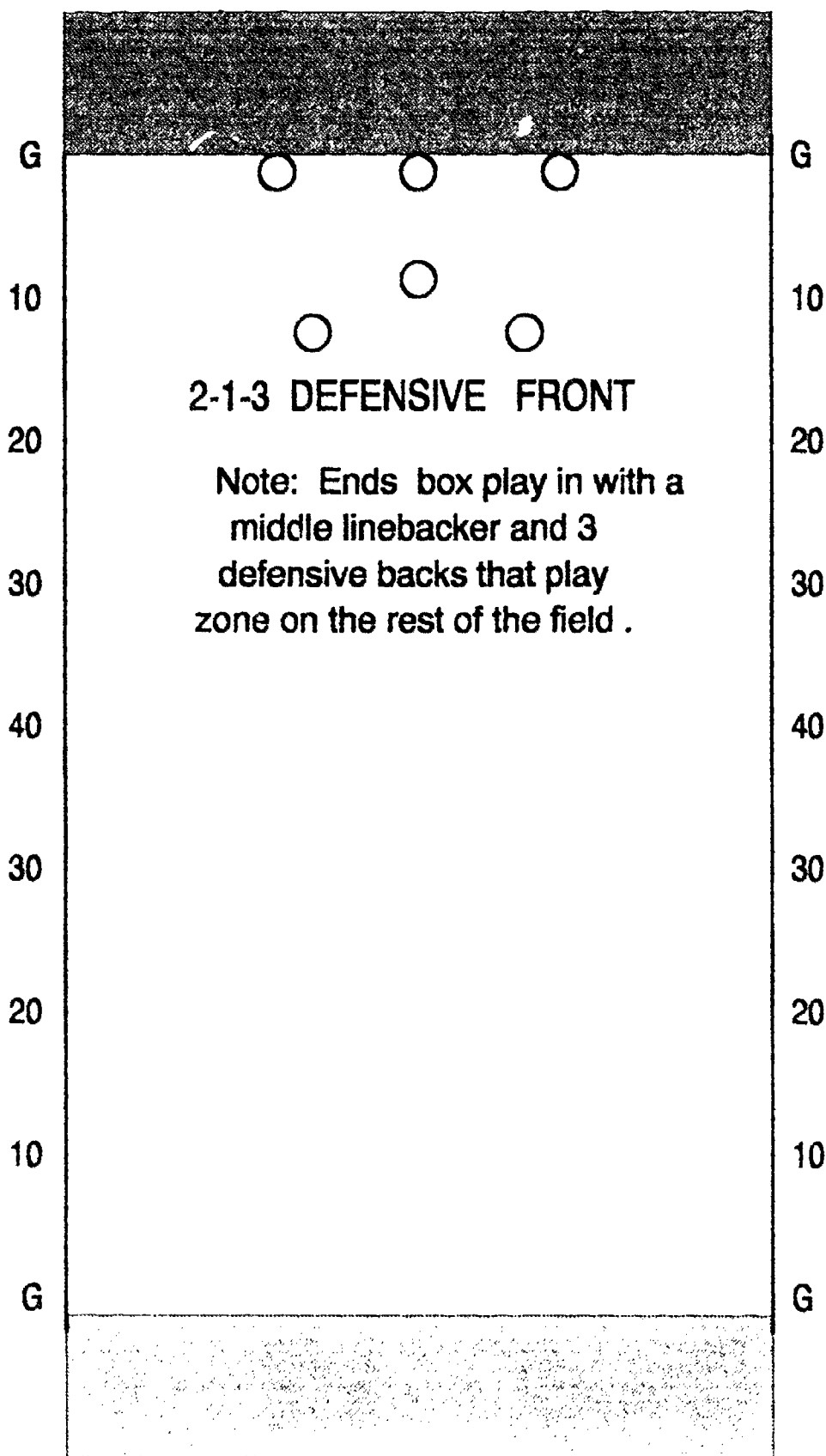




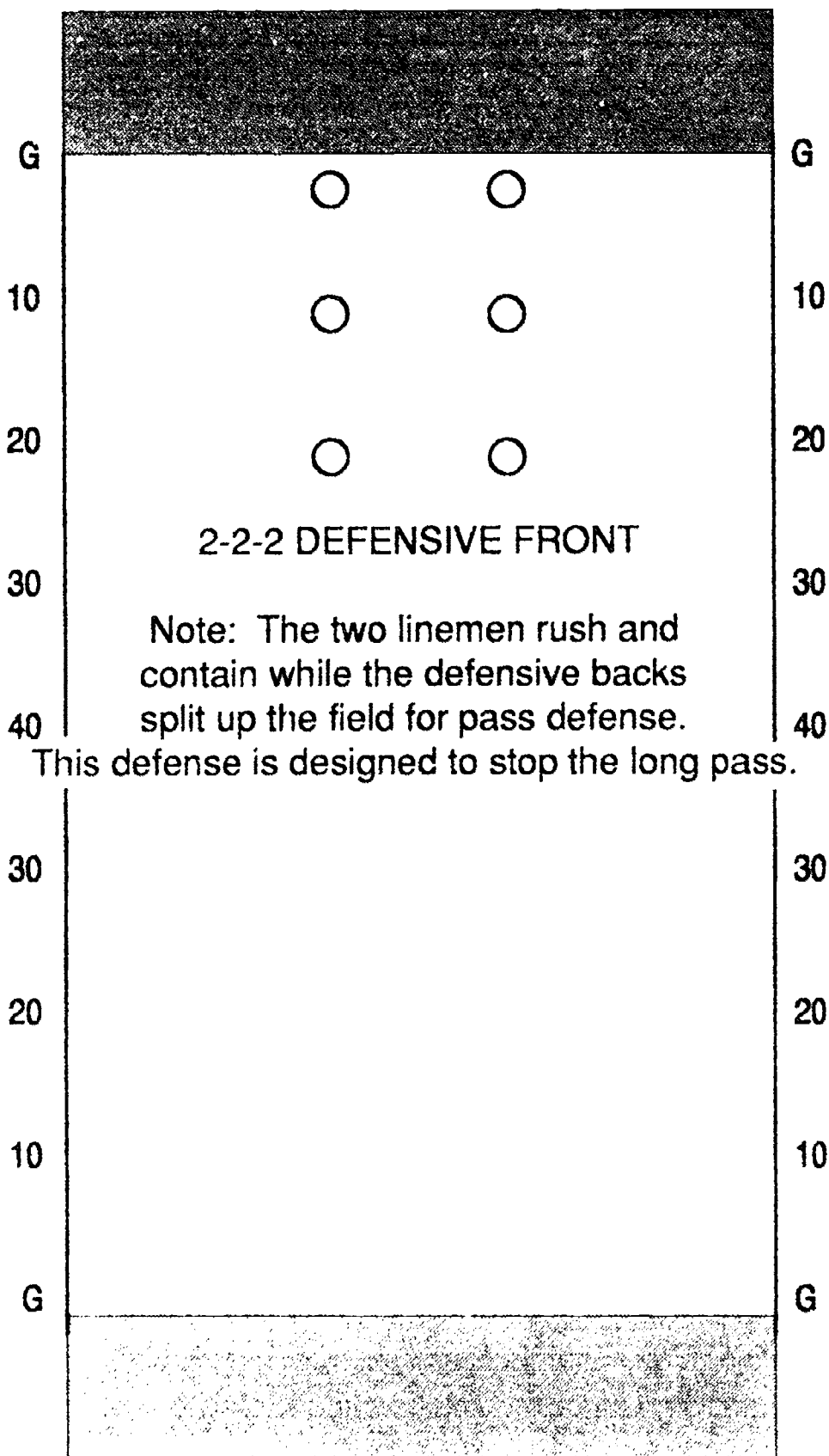


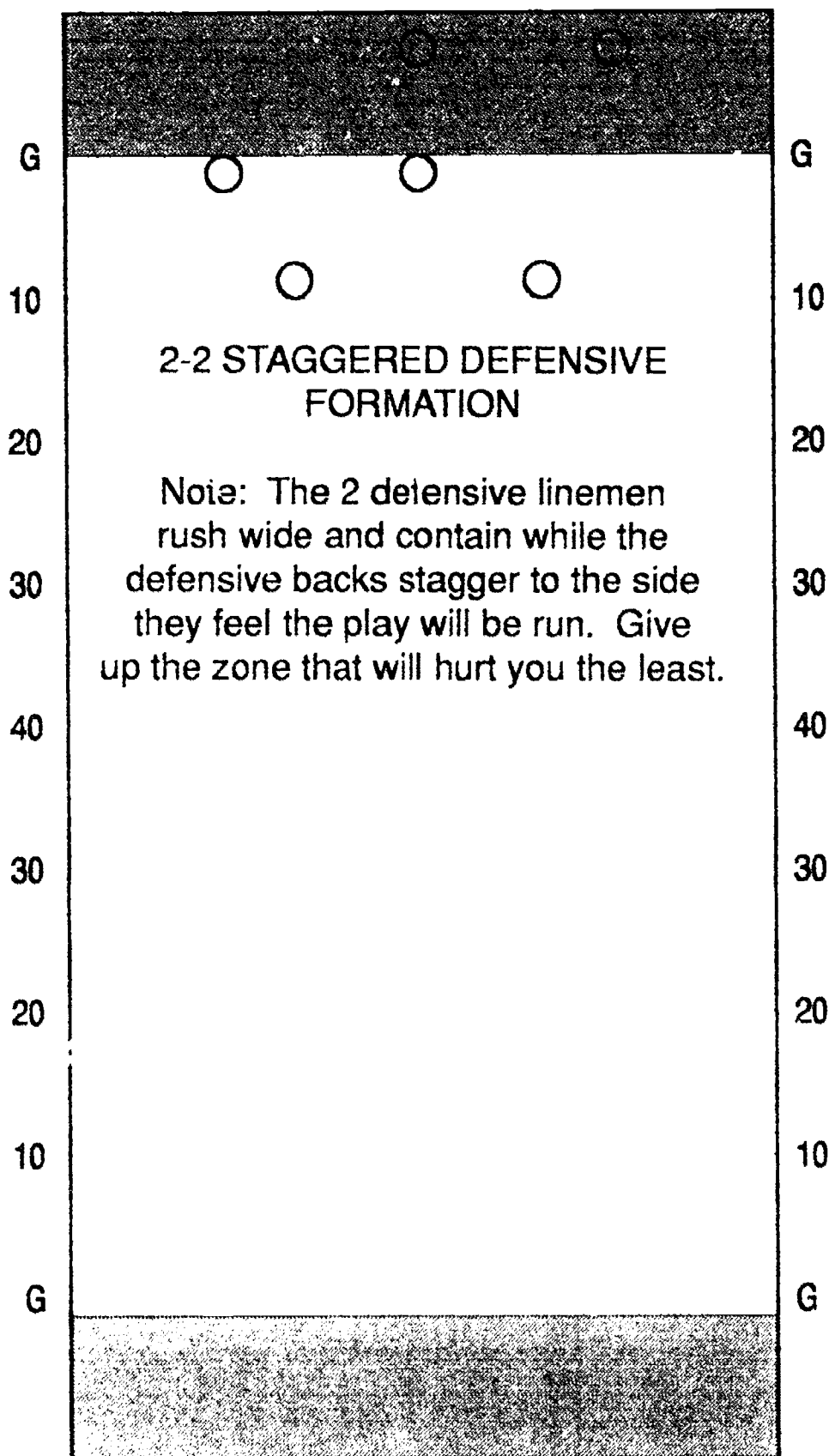


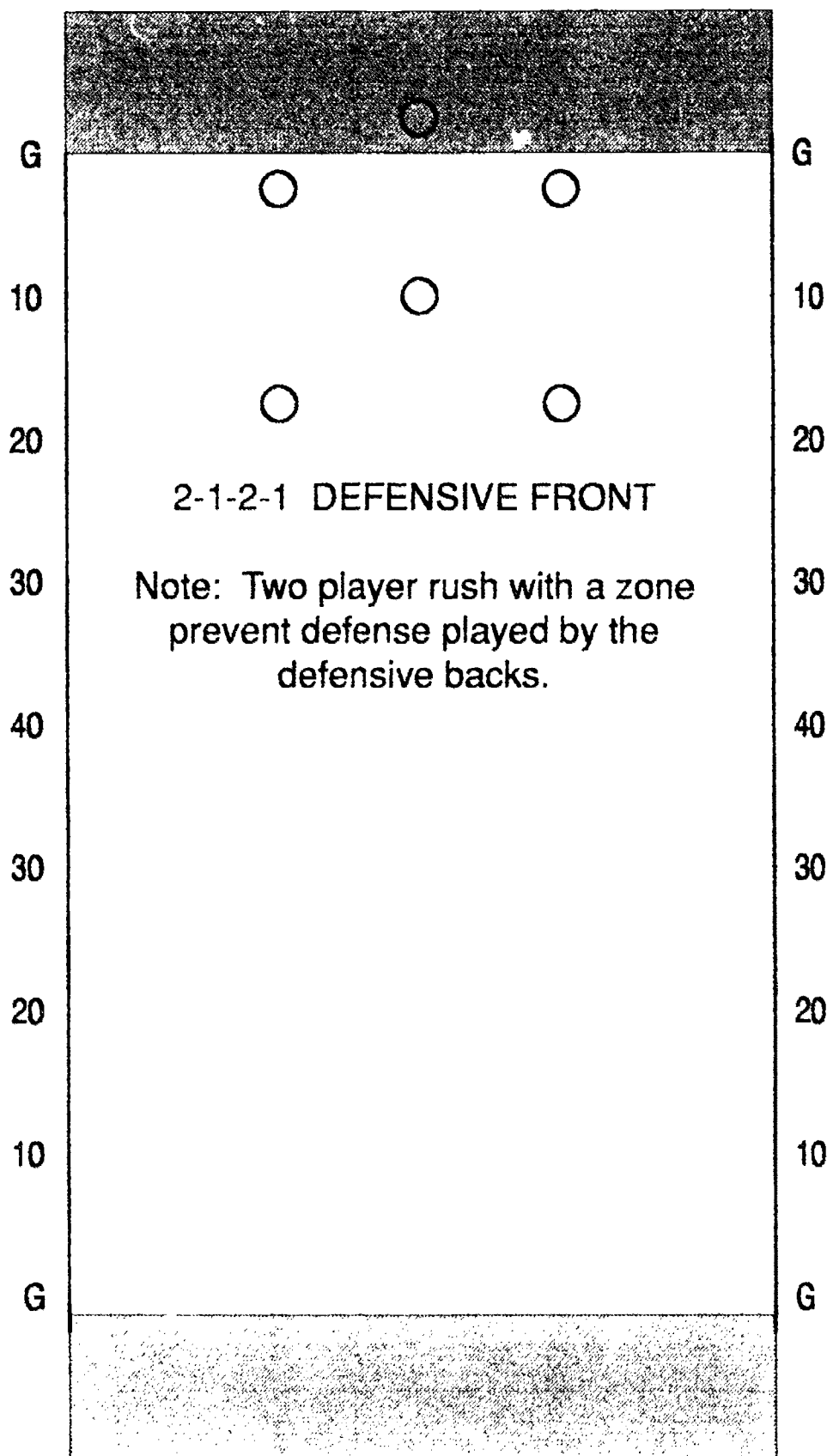




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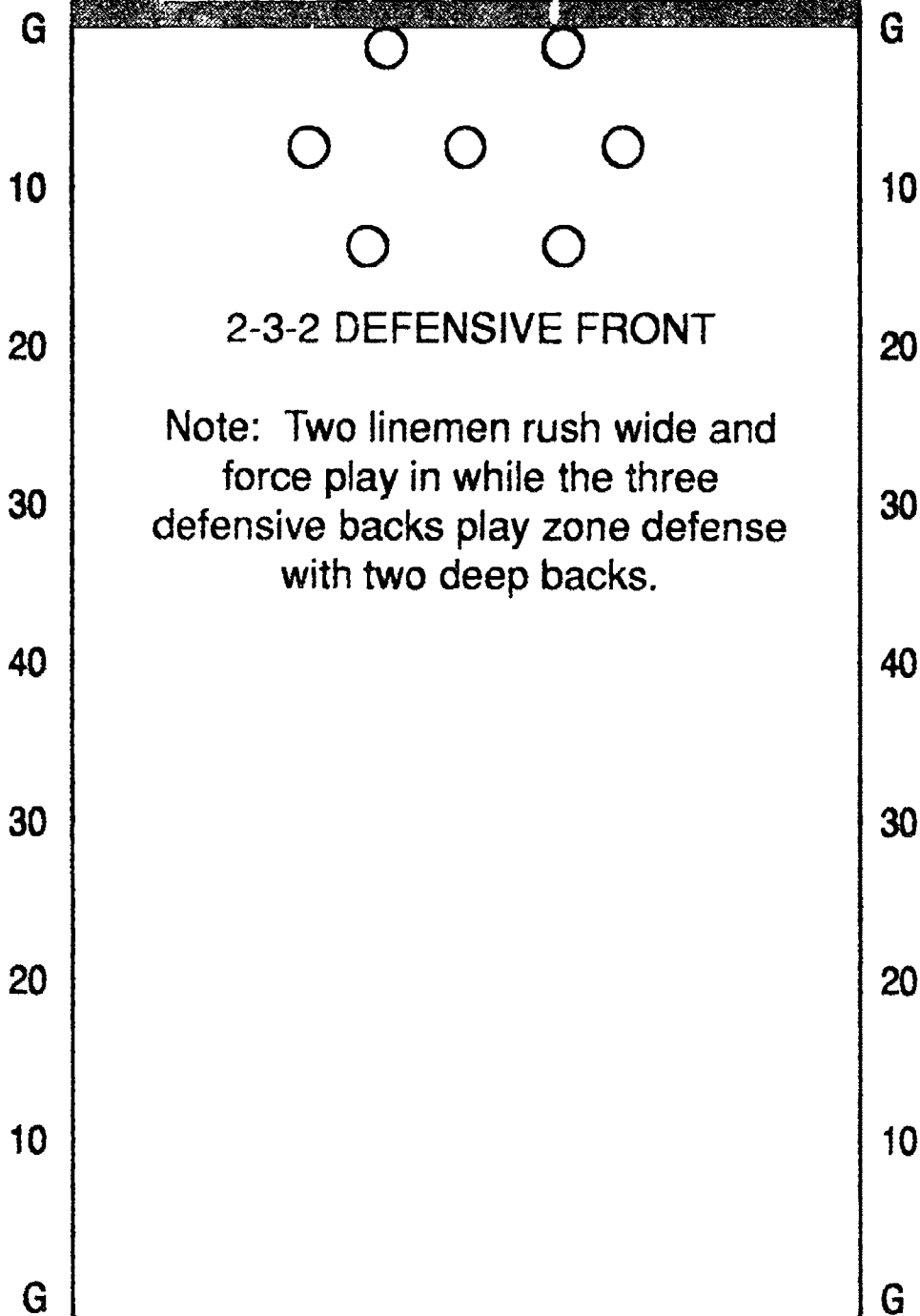






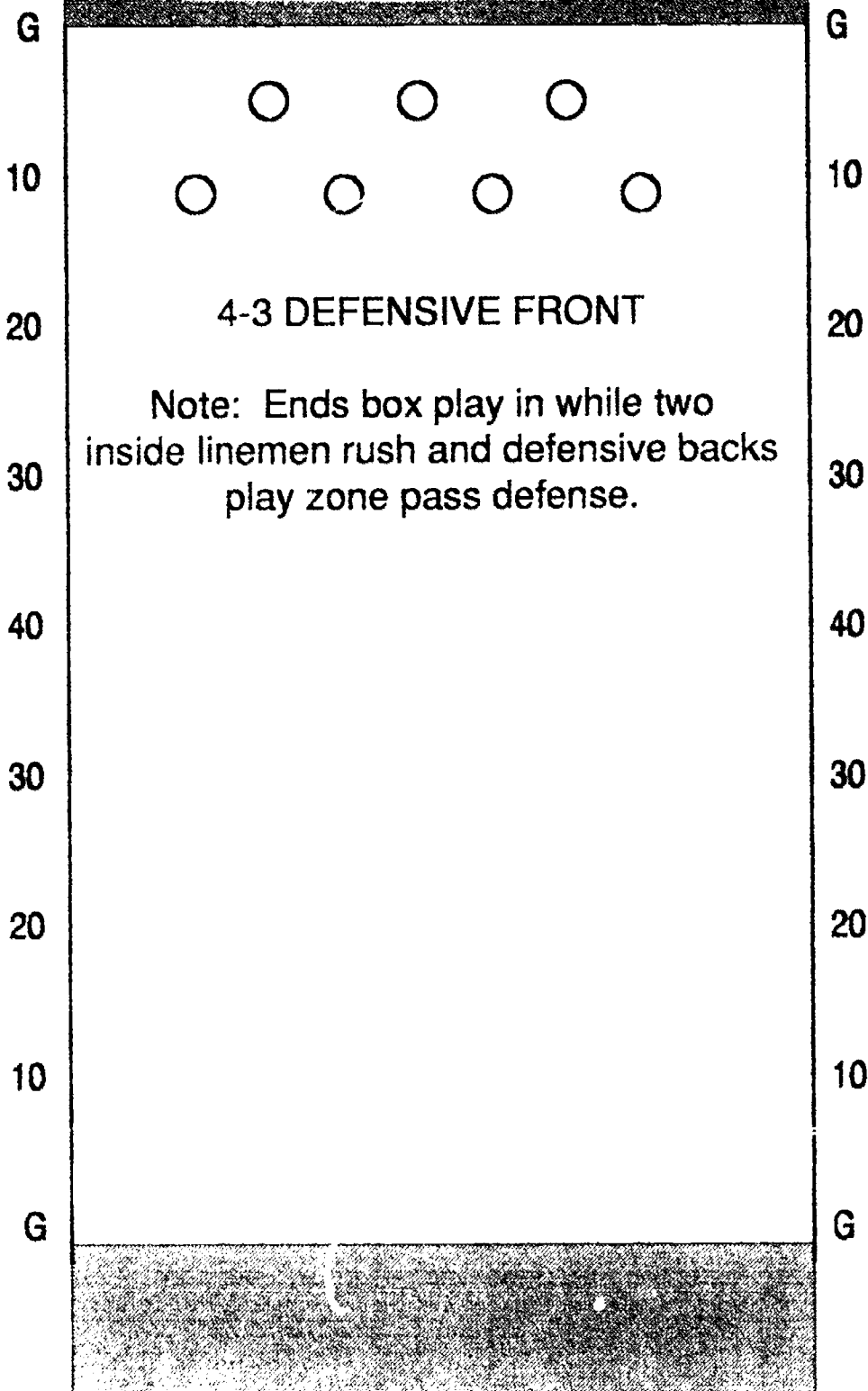


# 7 PLAYER RUN-PASS DEFENSE

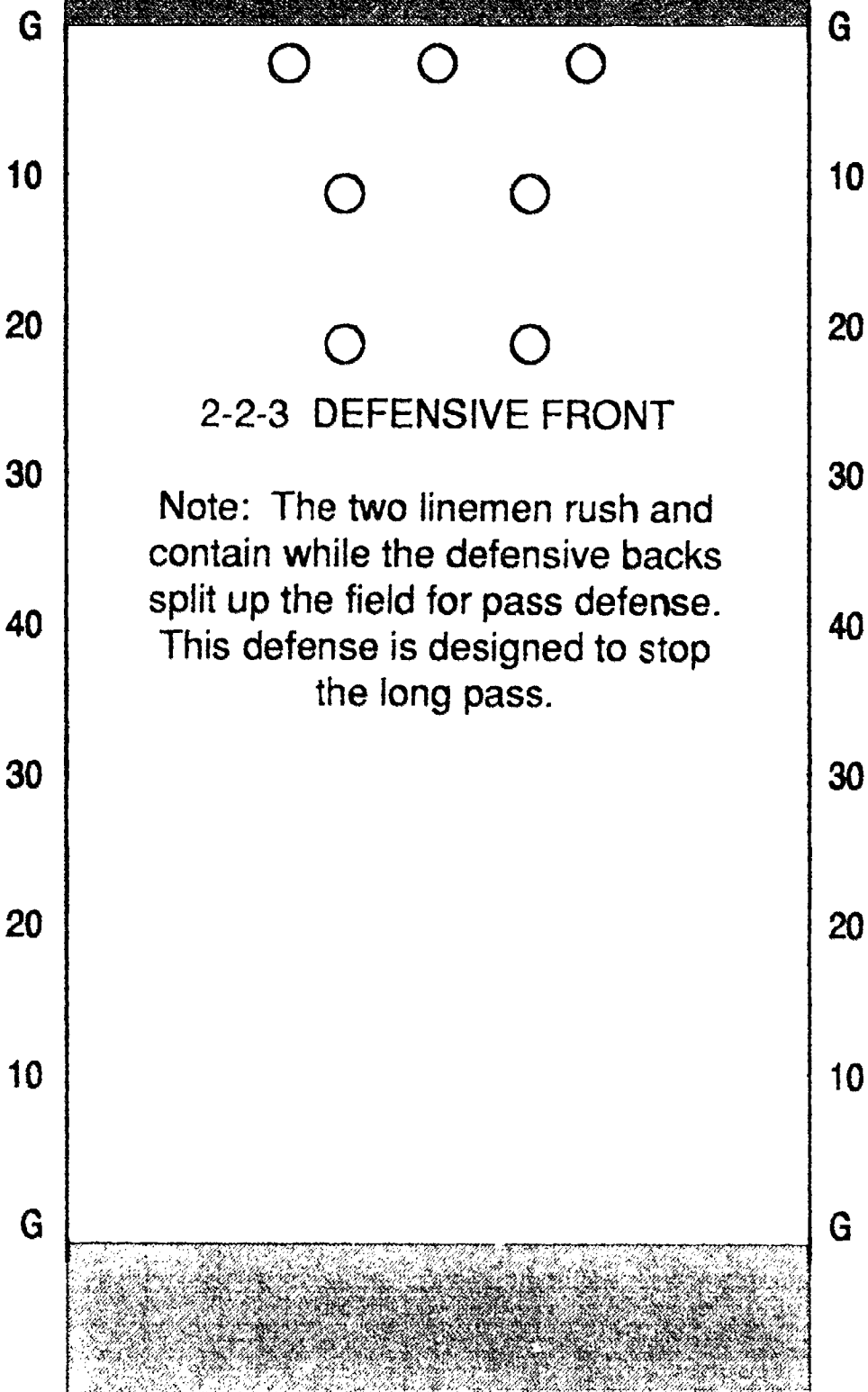




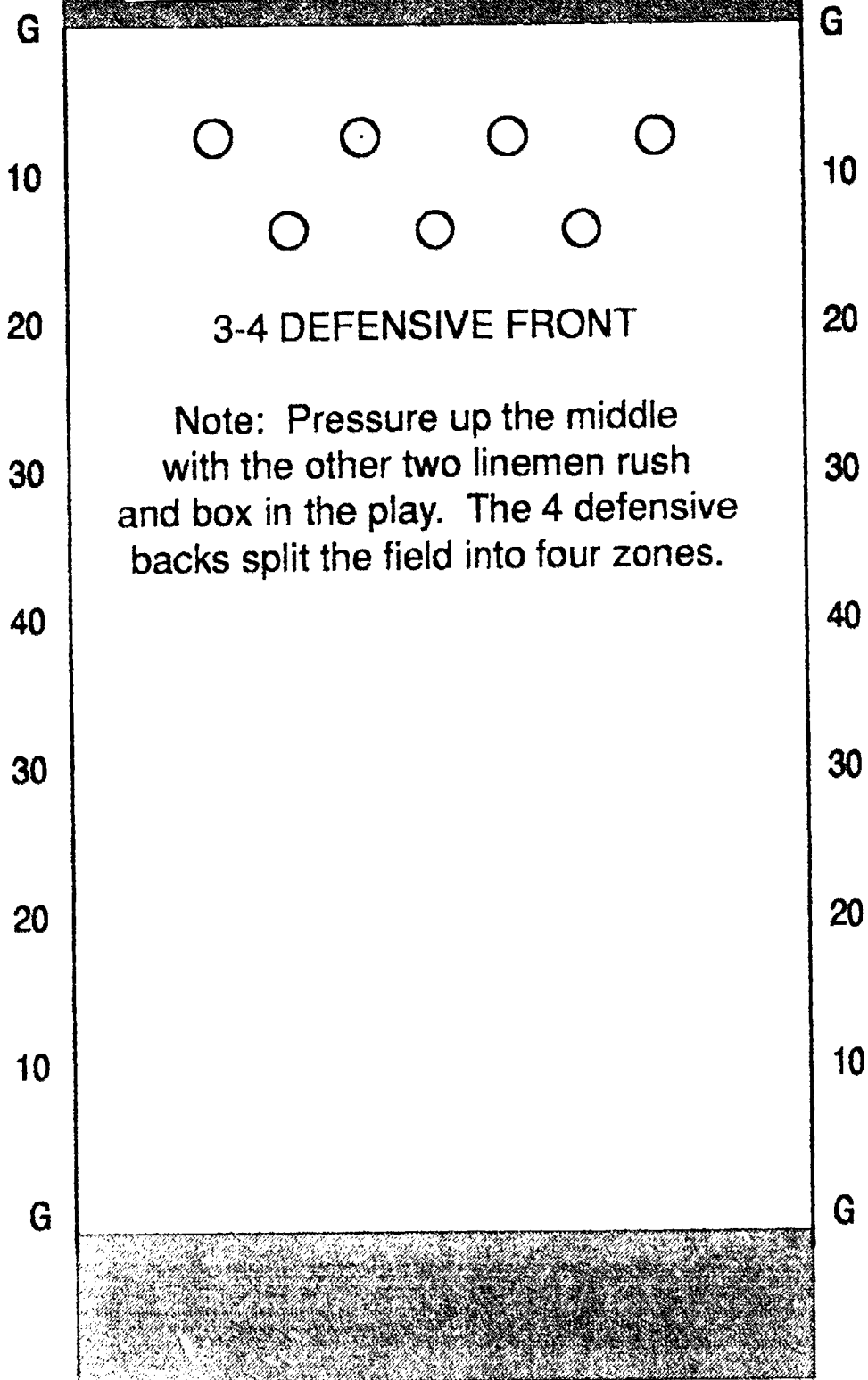
## 7 PLAYER RUN DEFENSE



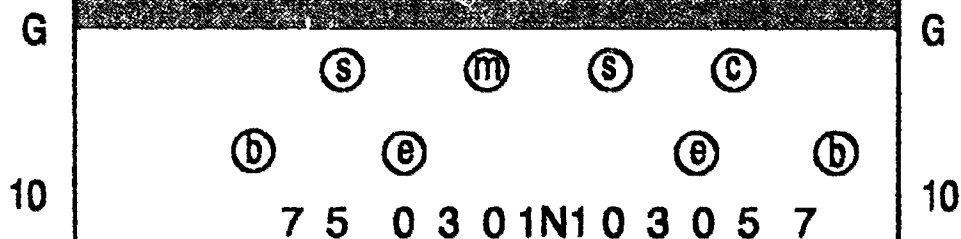
## 7 PLAYER PASS DEFENSE



## 7 PLAYER GOAL LINE DEFENSE



# 8 PLAYER RUN PASS DEFENSE



## Terminology

M-Free

C-Corner/Deep

B-Sweep/Flat Pass

S-Rotate

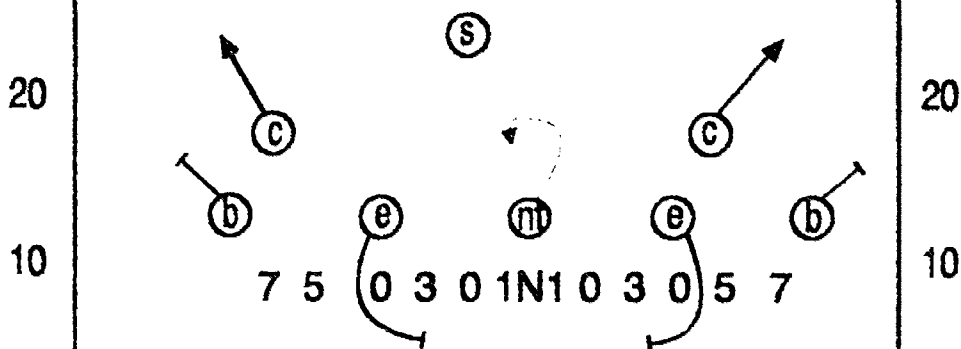
a. strong side curl

b. weak side rotate back& over

c. If motion gives both S deep

E-Rush Gap 5

NT-Rush or Pass D.

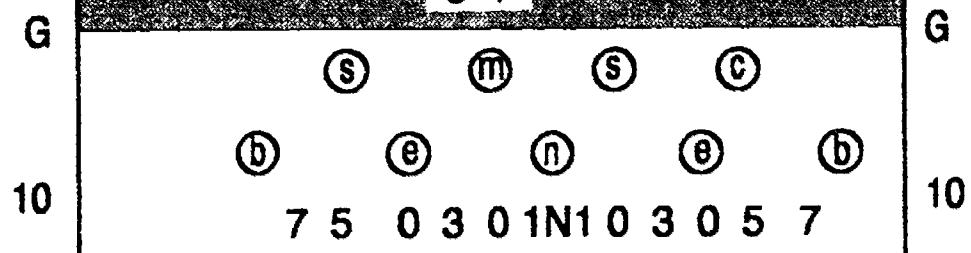


## 8 PLAYER PASS DEFENSE

1-4-2-1

# 9 PLAYER RUN-PASS DEFENSE

5-4



## Terminology

M-Free

C-Corner/Deep

B-Sweep/Flat Pass

S-Rotate

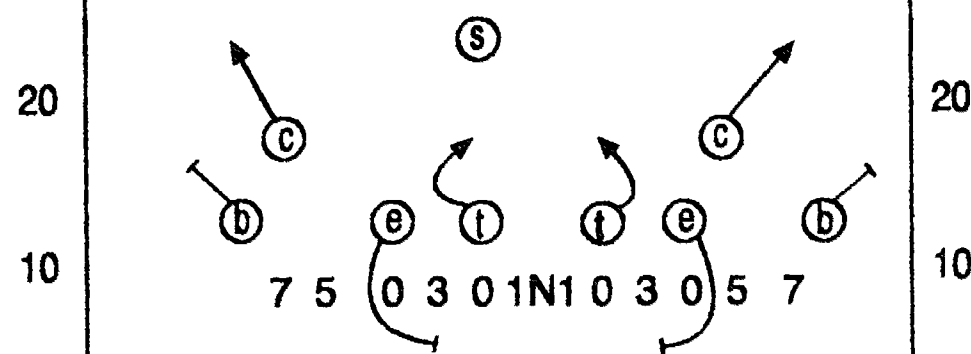
a. strong side curl

b. weak side rotate back& over

c. If motion gives both S deep

E-Rush Gap 5

N-Rush Gap 1

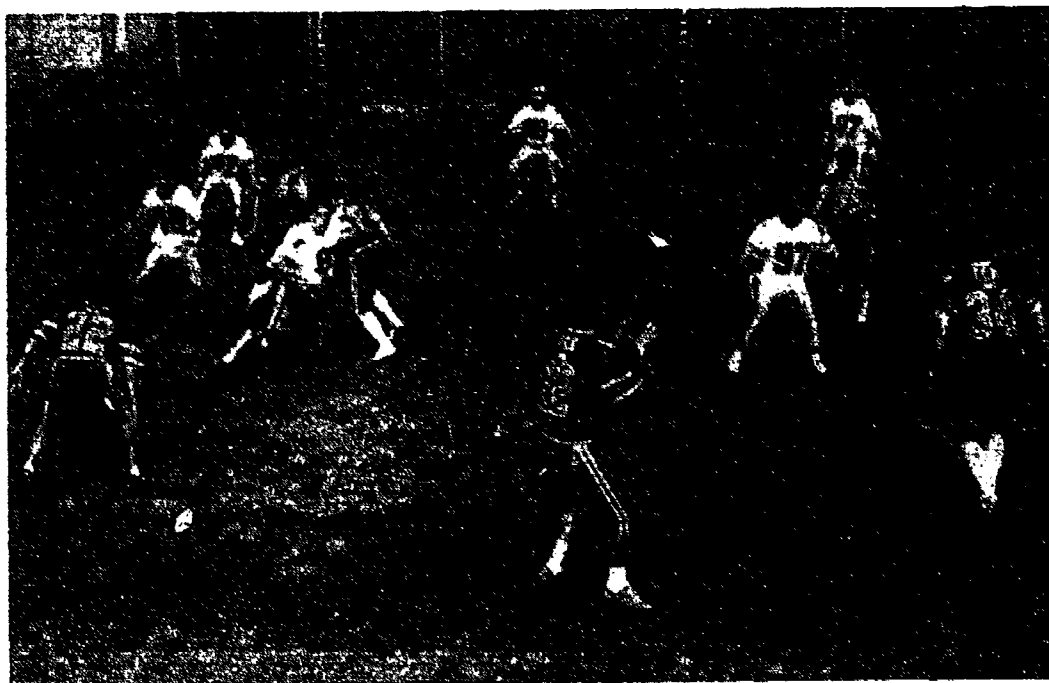


# 9 PLAYER PASS DEFENSE

2-4-2-1

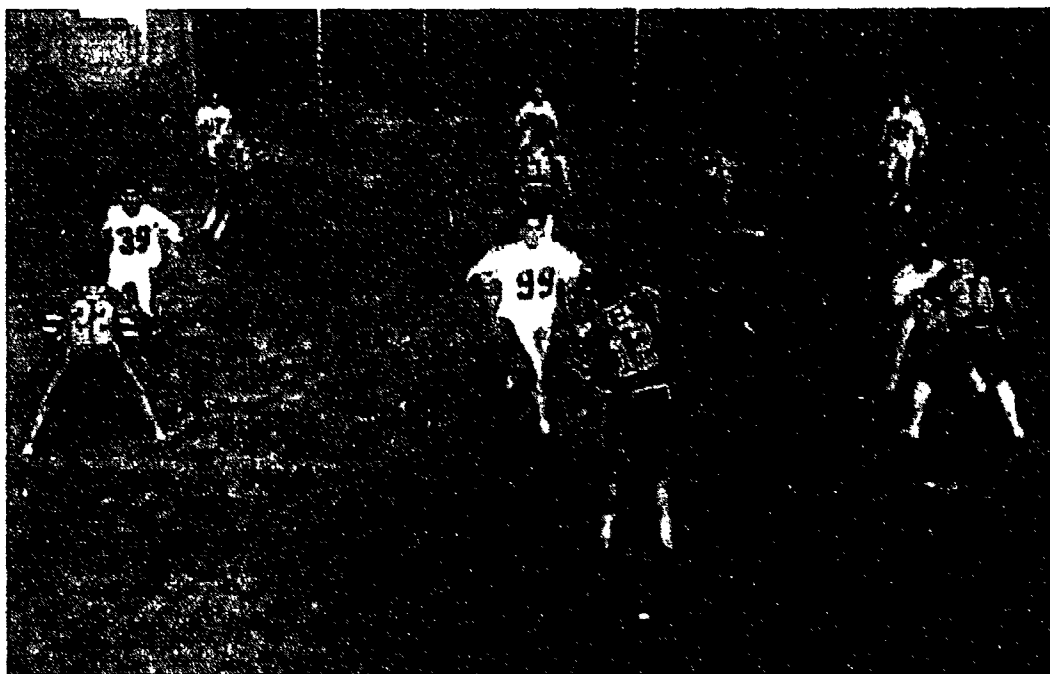
## EXPLANATION OF PLAYER-TO-PLAYER, ZONE, AND COMBINATION DEFENSE

### ZONE DEFENSE



As in basketball, the zone defense is devised to protect the entire playing area by placing players at strategic positions and giving them specific territory assignments. An obvious weakness of the zone defense is that opponents can flood the zone. When this occurs the defensive player must protect against the deepest offensive player. The defensive player goes after the ball after it is thrown. Remember, it is always better to sacrifice the completion of the short pass rather than the completion of the long pass. Zone defense is the standard defense most used in whatever formation. There is less chance for one player to make a big mistake.

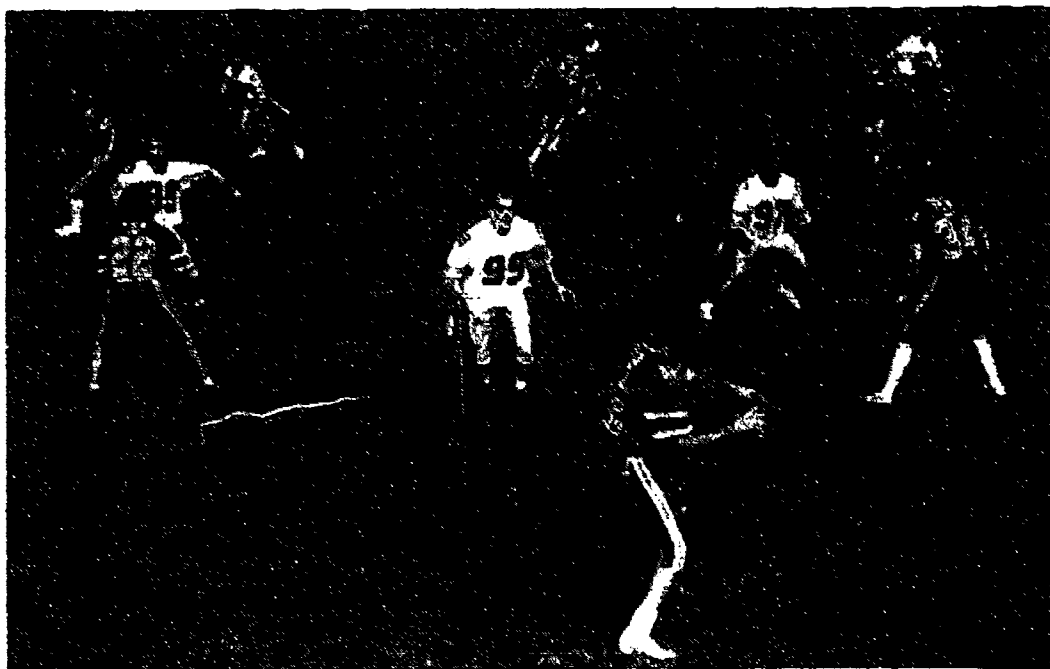
## PLAYER-TO-PLAYER DEFENSE



The player-to-player defense eliminates the problem of "flooded" zones. However, it increases the danger of leaving part of the field unprotected. As basketball coaches have discovered, one way to "shake loose" a pass receiver is to utilize screens. This technique consists of crossing ends or dropping players off. These maneuvers use one offensive player picking a defensive player off, causing him/her to get lost in the traffic, thereby freeing the other offensive player to receive the ball. Player-to-player defense can work for a team if it is a group of outstanding athletes with great speed and athletic ability to prevent getting beat. The length of time the team has played together and team communication make a big difference in their effectiveness on a player-to-player defense.



## PLAYER-TO-PLAYER/ZONE COMBINATION



The heading of this type of defense is self-explanatory. It is a combination of the principles of the zone defense and the player-to-player defense. This can be very effective if used at the right time and situation.

## DEFENSIVE HUDDLE AND SIGNALS

The defensive huddle is used for two primary reasons: to quickly inform the defensive team of the defense to be called and to help develop team morale. The defensive signal caller usually lines up facing his/her teammates at the spot where the ball is placed by the officials. The defensive captain gets the rest of the team around him/her, usually in a circle, and calls the signals. No arbitrary arrangement of personnel is used for this huddle such as employed in the offensive huddle.

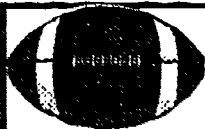
The signal to call the defense is a live color. All defensive formations are also named by color. The live color is the indicator for the call. The defense is called by the color and number in the huddle. When the defensive team breaks, the captain calls out many colors. If he/she sees a change in the formation of the offense, he/she may call a new defense. Here is when the live color comes into play. After the live color, the next color called is the new defense to be run. Example: in the huddle a 2-2-2 defense is called. The huddle breaks and the captain makes a change. He/she yells "red, green, blue, gold, red." The live color is gold so the new defense that will be run is the red, which in this case is a 3-3.





## CHECK LIST FOR TEAM DEFENSE

1. Sell your players on the fact that defense is very important. Make them believe it is a privilege to be on the defensive squad.
2. Teach each player responsibilities for their position and how they are to play the game. Teach the team concept philosophy and how each player and position fits in.
3. Draw on the board 6-player, 7-player, 8-player, and 9-player defensive fronts according to your program.
4. Explain, walk through and then run through the defense.
5. Teach concepts of zone defense.
6. Explain strengths and weaknesses of the player-to-player defense.
7. Describe the workings of the player-to-player, zone and combination defense.
8. Review the defensive huddle.
9. Explain the procedure to call defenses and how to change the call at the line.



## CHECK LIST FOR COMMON ERRORS IN TEAM DEFENSE

1. If players are not playing with enthusiasm - sell them on importance of defense.
2. If any part of the defense is not effective - break down in a drill. Analyze it and then correct.
3. If quarterback has too much time to throw - check the rush.
4. If power sweeps are hurting - check if players are boxing and pursuing.
5. If reverse runs or cross field passes are effective - check if defensive players are holding their zones.
6. If receiver outmaneuvers defensive back field - check team talk and footwork.
7. When play execution is not correct - check team's knowledge of the defense being used.
8. If there is faulty communication - go over what happens in the defensive huddle.

## DRILLS

The coach must make the following drills as game-like as possible:

1. **INDIVIDUAL BREAKDOWNS**  
Individual players are placed in their proper defensive positions, one at a time. Each player is shown his/her responsibilities and correct defensive play.
2. **SMALL GROUP BREAKDOWNS**  
Groups of players, such as linemen/women, work on their team responsibilities and fundamentals.
3. **FULL TEAM DRILL BREAKDOWNS**  
This is the final step in the drill breakdown. The team, as a whole, combines skills and play together.



### CHECK LIST FOR LEARNING PROGRESSION OF TEAM DEFENSE

1. Fundamentals taught.
2. Defensive theory and philosophy discussed.
3. Different formations taught in this order:
  - a) chalk talk
  - b) walk through
  - c) run through
  - d) against live offense
4. Explain differences, strengths and weaknesses of zone, player-to-player and combination defenses.
5. Teach defensive huddle signals and procedure to change at the line of scrimmage.
6. Have scrimmage with offense in a controlled manner to test extent of player's knowledge.

# CHAPTER 6

## SPECIAL TEAMS



### OUTLINE

- Punting the ball
- Place kicking
- Kick-off team, position and execution
- Drills
- Kick-off receiving team, position and execution
- Diagrams of receiving teams
- Punt formation
- Fake punt formation
- Drills
- Punt receiving formations
- Diagrams of punt receiving formations
- Drills
- Field goals and extra point formations
- Drills
- Alternate ways to score extra points

## PUNTING THE BALL



There is discussion as to whether punting is a defensive or an offensive play. On the one hand, if the team makes a lot of yardage on the punt, it is an offensive action. But, if the opponent is put in bad field position, then it is up to the defense. Since the team cannot retain possession after the ball is punted, this author takes the position that punting is a defensive maneuver.

The fundamentals of punting the football consist of the following: the grip and ball release, steps, contact point and the follow-through.

The grip and ball release. The method of holding the ball is up to the individual skilled athlete. The ball is received from the center waist high with the palms facing each other. Once possession of the ball is made, the right hand will turn so the palm is facing up and the ball is resting on the palm. The middle finger should be running along one of the seams of the ball. The left hand is held lightly against the left side of the ball and steadies the punter.

The steps. Two steps are recommended after the punter is 10 yards deep from the center snap. The stance of the punter can be parallel or staggered. It depends on the athlete's preference. The first step is taken with the right foot. It is important that this step be fairly short and directly to the spot where the ball is to be kicked. If the kicker is left-footed, the first step is taken with the left foot.

Contacting the ball. The eyes must watch the ball all the way through the contact and follow-through. If the ball is contacted at a low point, it will be a line drive kick. If the ball is contacted at a higher point, the ball will travel at low projectory. To put the ball out of bounds the punter should aim at the point on the out of bounds line and go for it.

The follow-through. As the ball is met the arms travel upward and extend sideways. The head is down and the body weight is on the ball of the left foot.

## PLACE KICKING



Place kicking requires the coordination of two athletes, the kicker and the holder. In most leagues a kicking tee or block is used to elevate the ball.

The holder. The person to receive the ball from the center is 8-10 yards behind the center. This distance is in relation to the strength of the center. The person holding the ball has his/her left knee on the ground at the spot where the ball is to be placed down. The kicker should have the responsibility for selection of the spot. The right leg of the holder is extended forward and slightly bent. The hands are extended forward in anticipation of the snap. The ball is taken by the two hands and eased directly to the spot where the ball is to be placed down. The palm of the left hand holds the ball while the right hand is removed out of the way. The holder's job is to hold the ball at the proper angle and position to help the kicker hit the mark and have a good kick.

**The kicker.** The kicker decides which angle he/she wants the ball to be placed and the position of the ball. After the placing of the ball has been determined, the kicker assumes his/her stance about one step away from the ball. The distance is left up to the kicker. The kicker should have his/her feet together with a partial forward body lean. Eyes are looking down at the target. As the ball comes into the holder's hands, the kicker takes his/her first and only step to the ball. Plant the left foot just next to the ball as the right foot comes through and makes contact with the ball and follows through. Contact should be made on the lower half of the football. The head should be down throughout the kicking motion, ending with the arms up and to the side.



## KICK-OFF TEAM

The kick-off is an important play in flagball because it is the first time a team has an opportunity to receive the ball. Also, the field position gained or lost can make a big difference in play selection and momentum in the game. Field position is of prime importance and the kick-off is the key to make this happen. The following statements list the positions and responsibilities of each player on the kick-off team.

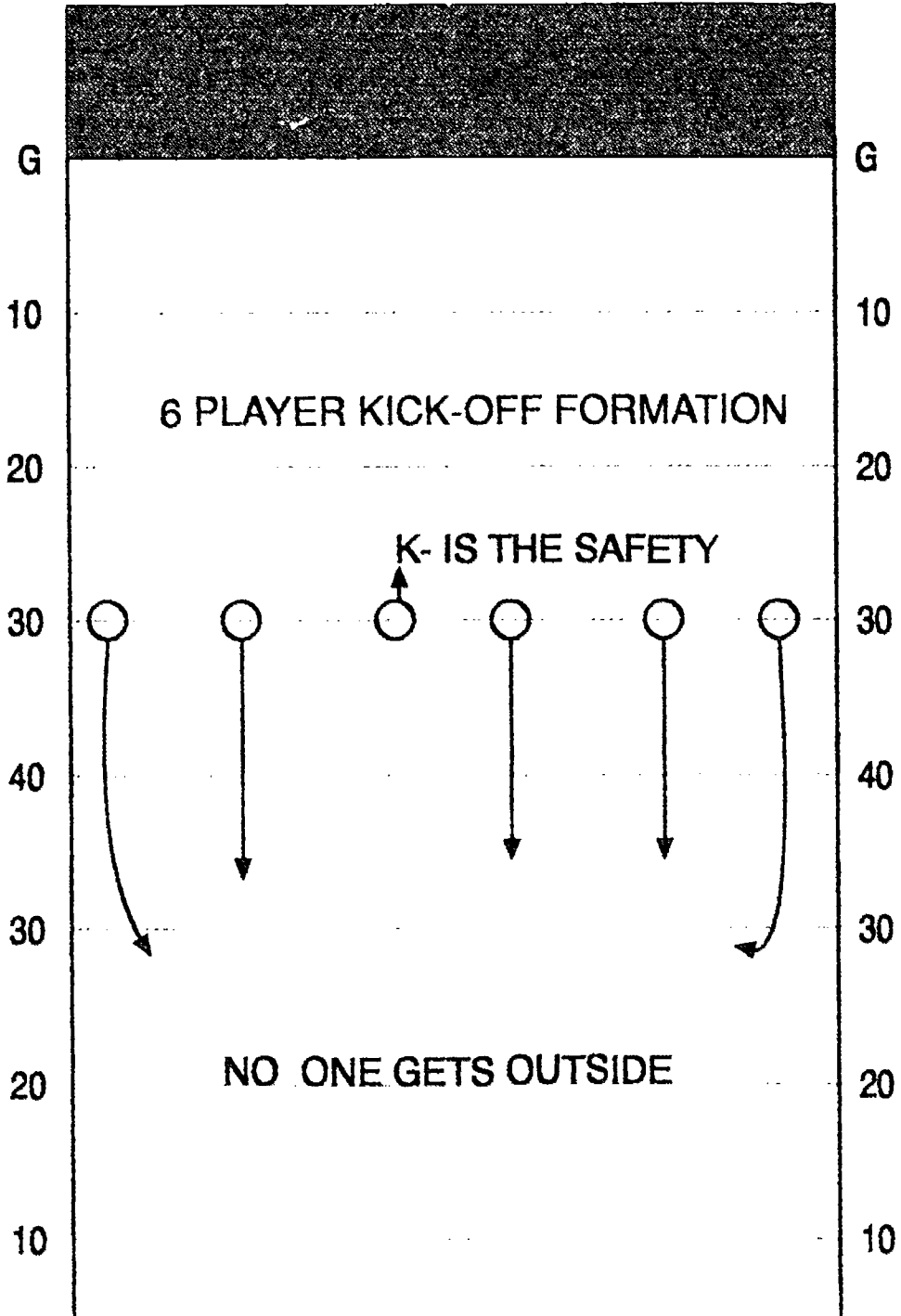
**Outside men/women.** The two fastest players on the team should play this position. They must get to the kick-off as fast as possible.

**Guards.** They are the second players in from the outside. Guards veer out and have outside responsibility. This disrupts the opponents' blocking strategy.

**Middle man/woman.** He/she is in the middle and lets no one past him/her. The middle man/woman must be big and strong and doesn't miss flags.

**Safety (kicker).** The safety is the player who kicked the ball. He/she stays back and, if no one can get the opposition, he/she pulls the flag. The safety NEVER MISSES THE FLAG!





In the diagram on the previous page, there are a few key things to remember:

1. The two ends box the play in; no one gets outside them.
2. All players fill their lanes down the field so the entire field is covered.
3. The kicker is the safety and no one gets by the kicker.
4. The personnel on the kick-off team are the 6 fastest and best flag pullers on the team.

## **DRILLS**

The only drill to run is kick-off after kick-off with two full teams to practice filling lanes and boxing in with great coverage. Have the kick-off receiving team execute many different run backs against the kicking team to strengthen coverage.

## **KICK-OFF RECEIVING TEAM**

A return on the kick-off can give a team a real big boost, so practicing the different returns is time well spent. The following are formations and strategies for each of the returns illustrated for 6-man flagball. (Note: In most 7, 8, and 9-player games there is no kick-off. The ball is put on the 20 yard line, first down. Therefore, these are not illustrated. Any of the 6-player formations illustrated could be modified and work for 7, 8, and 9-player flagball.)

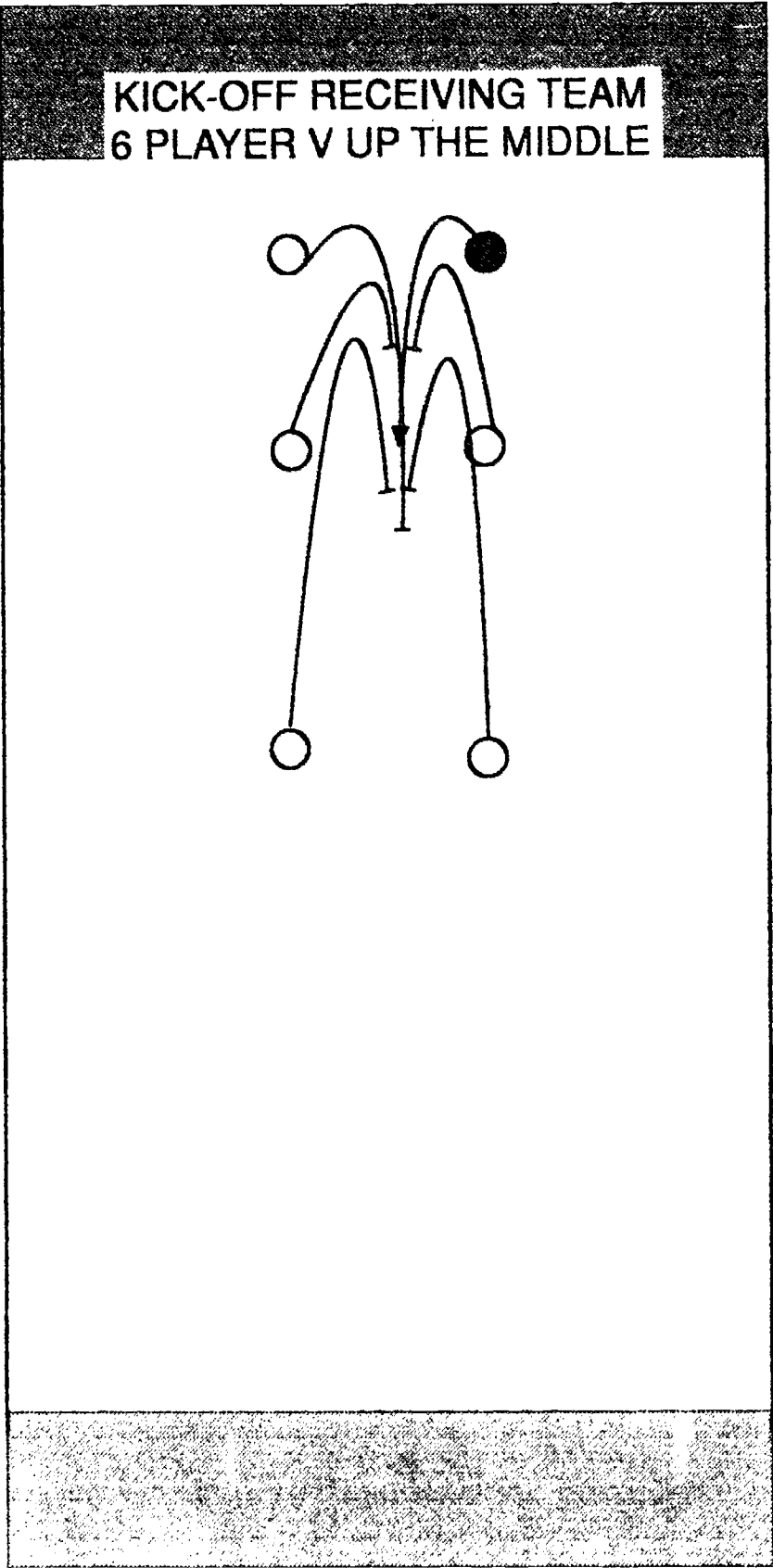
## **NIRSA RULES:**

During a kick the receiving team may signal for a fair catch while the ball is in flight and is beyond the kicker's free kick line or scrimmage line. The player on the receiving team lifts his/her hand and arm high into the air and waves it to signal fair catch. Once the ball is caught it is dead at the spot and cannot be advanced.

## **KICK-OFF RETURN UP THE MIDDLE**

The two front men/women have to line up 10-15 yards away from the kicker. When the ball is kicked they drop back 10-15 yards to help form a wedge at the spot where their teammate has caught the ball. This wedge leads the ball receiver up the middle of the field. The ball carrier stays within the alley formed by the blockers as long as possible. Each player must block. When the receiver sees daylight, he/she goes outside. The key to this formation is staying bunched together and letting the other team come to you. This breaks up the coverage and gets the opposition out of their lanes and opens up a run back.

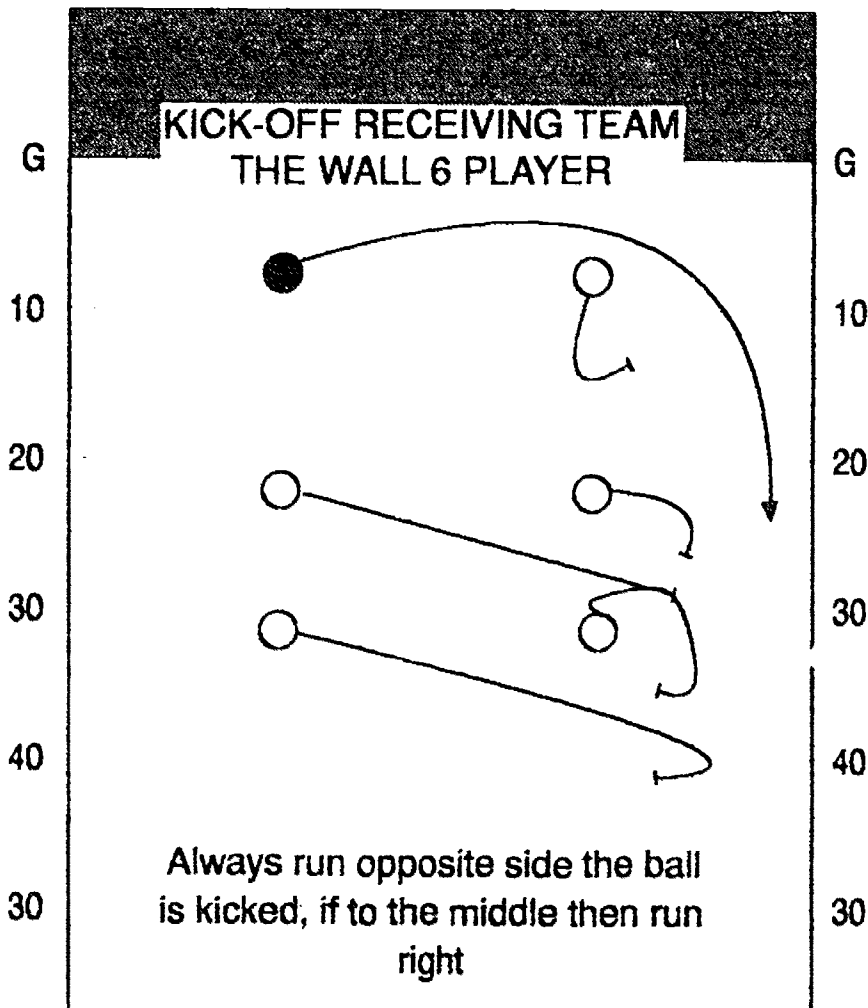




**KICK-OFF RETURN WALL LEFT OR WALL RIGHT**

Always set up the wall the opposite side the ball is kicked. This gives the players time to get into position. Usually the kicking team will automatically break to the side the ball is kicked. This gives the players on the receiving team the advantage of having the player they block on the inside. The receiving team drops back and across. The receiver lets the wall set up as he/she catches the ball and runs across field and down the line. If every player blocks his/her opposing player it should result in a touchdown.

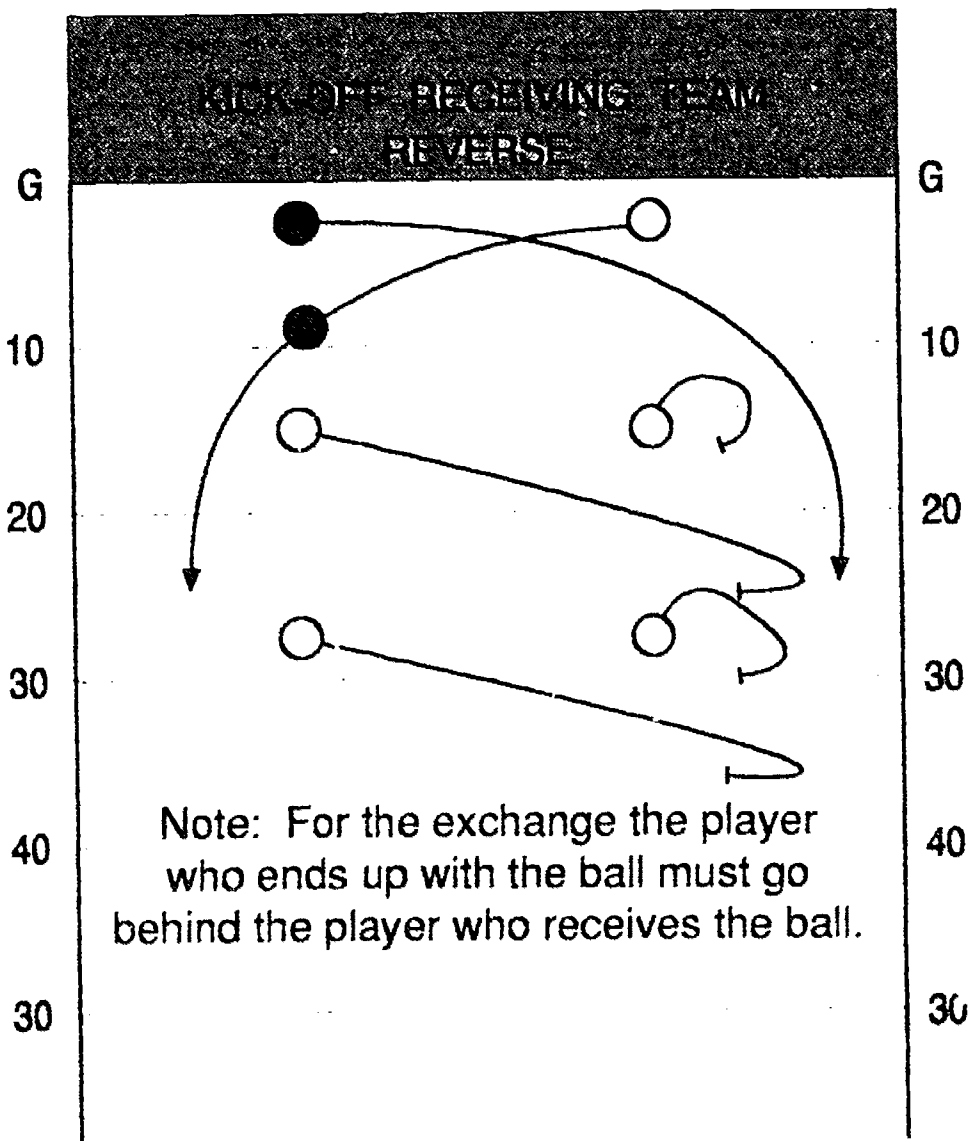
If the ball is not clearly kicked right or left and in doubt, run right. This call needs to be clear to eliminate any confusion with players. The key here is that every player blocks his/her opposing player. Remember, don't go out of the wall after the defensive player; let them come to you. This return is especially good against a team who kicks the ball high and deep.



## KICK-OFF RECEIVING TEAM REVERSE

The wall is set up just the same as the previous formation, but it is a decoy. All team members hustle to their positions. The player who receives the ball runs to and in front of his/her teammate. This is where the exchange takes place. This play is usually run after a few successful walls right or walls left have been executed. This reception has the greatest risk because of two factors: there is a ball exchange and the element of surprise must be evident or it will not work.

The personnel for the kick-off receiving team consists of the two-three best blockers on the team along with the four-six fastest players. Runbacks are an exciting part of the game if executed properly.



PUNT FORMATION

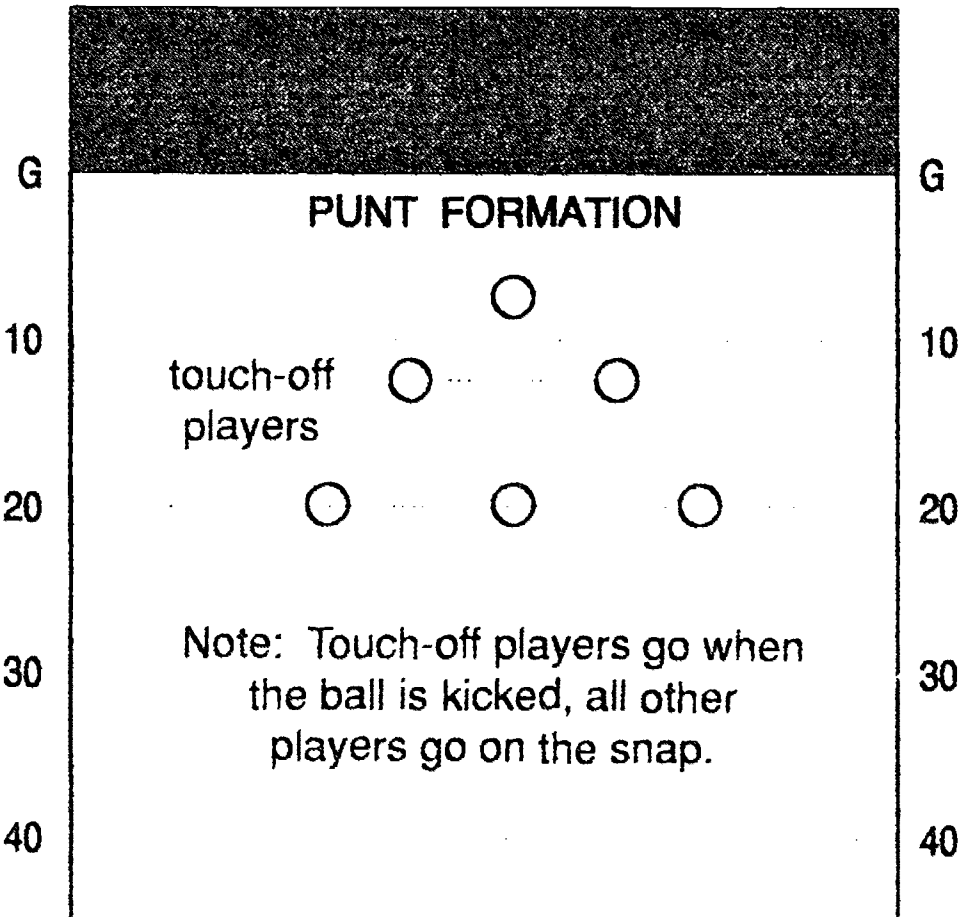
The following are the duties of each player in on the punt:

Center. Make sure you know the correct number and hike the ball on that number. Make the snap hard and right to the punter. He/she should not have to move one step. A bad hike may lose a game. After hiking the ball, run down in pursuit as fast as possible.

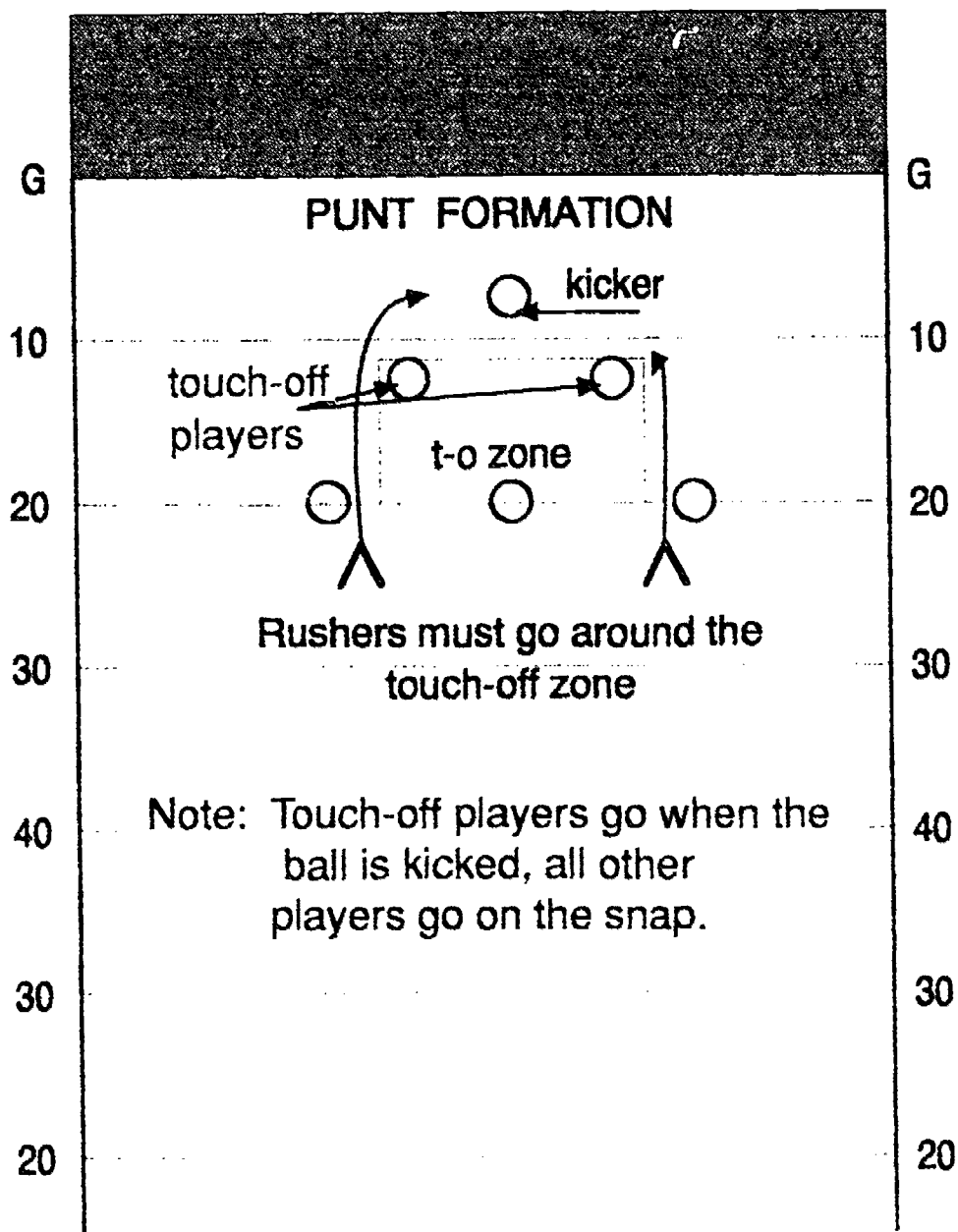
Ends. Make sure you don't move too soon. As soon as the number is called and the ball is hiked, rush downfield after the opponent. Rush from the outside. Don't let the play go outside.

Touch-off men/women. Do not move too soon and do not block. You are stationary at all times. Always touch-off, even if the team is not kicking. Line up about 8 yards behind the center (SARC 6-man rules).

Kicker. Watch the ball all the way from the center. Make sure you have the ball before trying to kick it. Don't pay attention to the on-coming rushers. Get rid of the ball as best you can. The higher and deeper the punt, the better.



**SARC PUNT FORMATION**



The above diagram illustrates the touch-off zone and its boundaries. The reason for the zone is to prevent players from getting kicked in the face. This makes the game safer.

**Examples of SARC Kick from Scrimmage Rules and Illustrations:**  
(taken from SARC Rule Book, Section 2. Kicks from Scrimmage,  
pp. 18 - 19)

**Article 1.** If team A intends to kick from scrimmage, two (2) players must designate a touch-off safety zone by aligning themselves as shown in the DIAGRAM, and touching fingertips while both feet are in contact with the ground without changing position of the feet afterward. The touch-off must be made while the team is set.

**Article 2.** The touch-off men shall not move until the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage, except to hand off or to execute a backward pass in a fake kick situation (...feet must be stationary) or to be the holder of a place kick or to advance a scrimmage kick that has not crossed the line of scrimmage. Comment: Team A is not required to kick the ball by the act of touching-off. They may execute a run or pass play. However, if a team does touch-off, all of the rules governing the touch-off situation are in effect. If a team wishes to line up in a field-goal formation and execute a run or pass play, the snap may go directly to any backfield man. Deceptive touch-offs, such as pretending to touch, are Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

**Article 3.** No opponent shall contact a touch-off man until the ball has crossed the scrimmage line.

**Article 4.** No player of A or B shall enter the touch-off zone until the ball has crossed the scrimmage line or until it has been determined that a kick is not to be attempted.

**Article 5.** No player of B shall push an opponent into the zone in an attempt to block the kick.

**Article 6.** No defender shall block a kick as a rusher.

**Article 7.** Only one rusher may penetrate beyond the end of the touch-off zone endline extended unless the kicker indicates a fake kick.

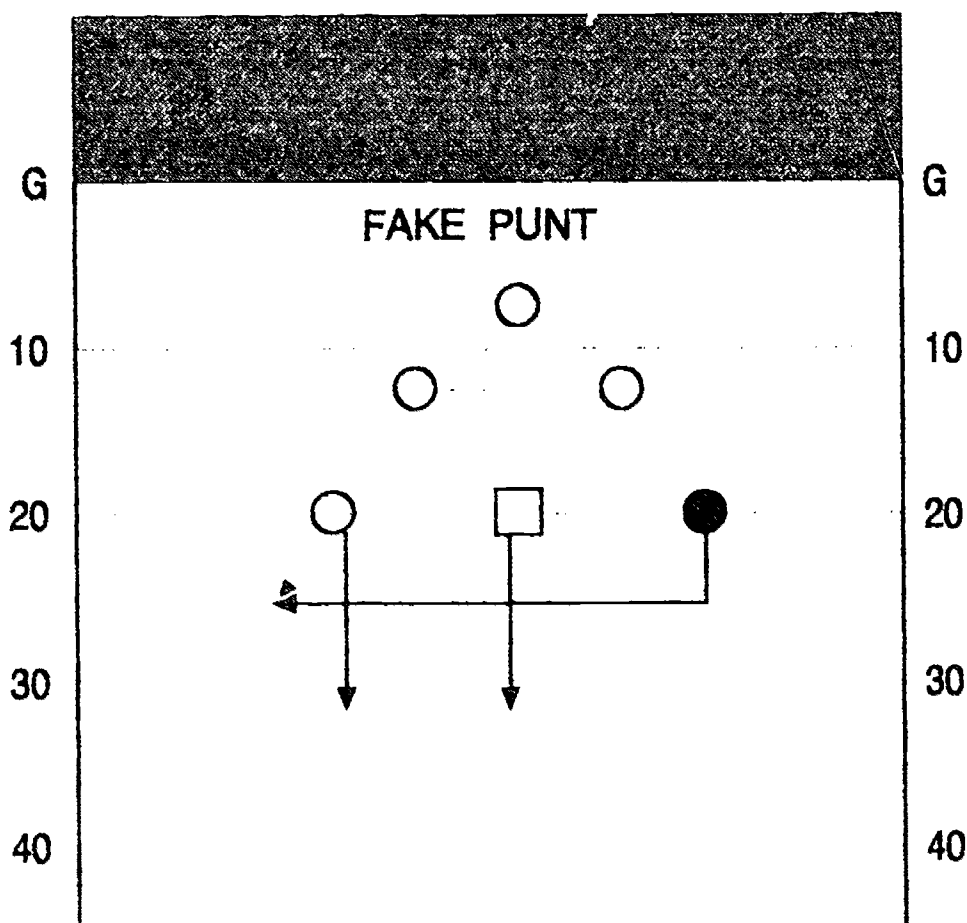
**Article 8.** A defender may block a scrimmage kick from his own side of the line-of-scrimmage. He may not climb on a teammate to gain an advantage.

**Article 9.** The kicker may not intentionally kick the ball at a rusher.

**Article 10.** The flag of the kicker must be pulled before the ball leaves his foot in kicks from scrimmage. (Punts or place kicks)

**Penalties:** Sec. 2, Articles 1 through 8 - five (5) yards from previous spot (scrimmage line). Article 9 - ten (10) yards).

## FAKE PUNT FORMATION



In the above diagram the play looks like a punt, but the defense calls the side to run the play. If the opponents rush the right side, the play is run to the left. Then the quarterback can roll away from the rush and throw the ball. In the huddle the quarterback lets the team realize the play will be called at the line. The center clears a zone along with the onside end and the opposite end. He/she then fills the vacant zone for the reception. The key here is that the receiver knows where the first down is and gets there. That is the most crucial part of the play. Once the ball is caught and the first down gained, the receiver turns up field for a possible score.



## DRILLS

The fundamentals of punting were covered earlier in the chapter. The punter works out on his/her own. When the rest of the team joins him/her, the following is done: line up in punt formation and run the punt play over and over with no receiving team. The team practices the fake to either side. The controlled scrimmage is held with receiving and punting teams. The fake punt should be mixed in, going to either side throughout the practice session.

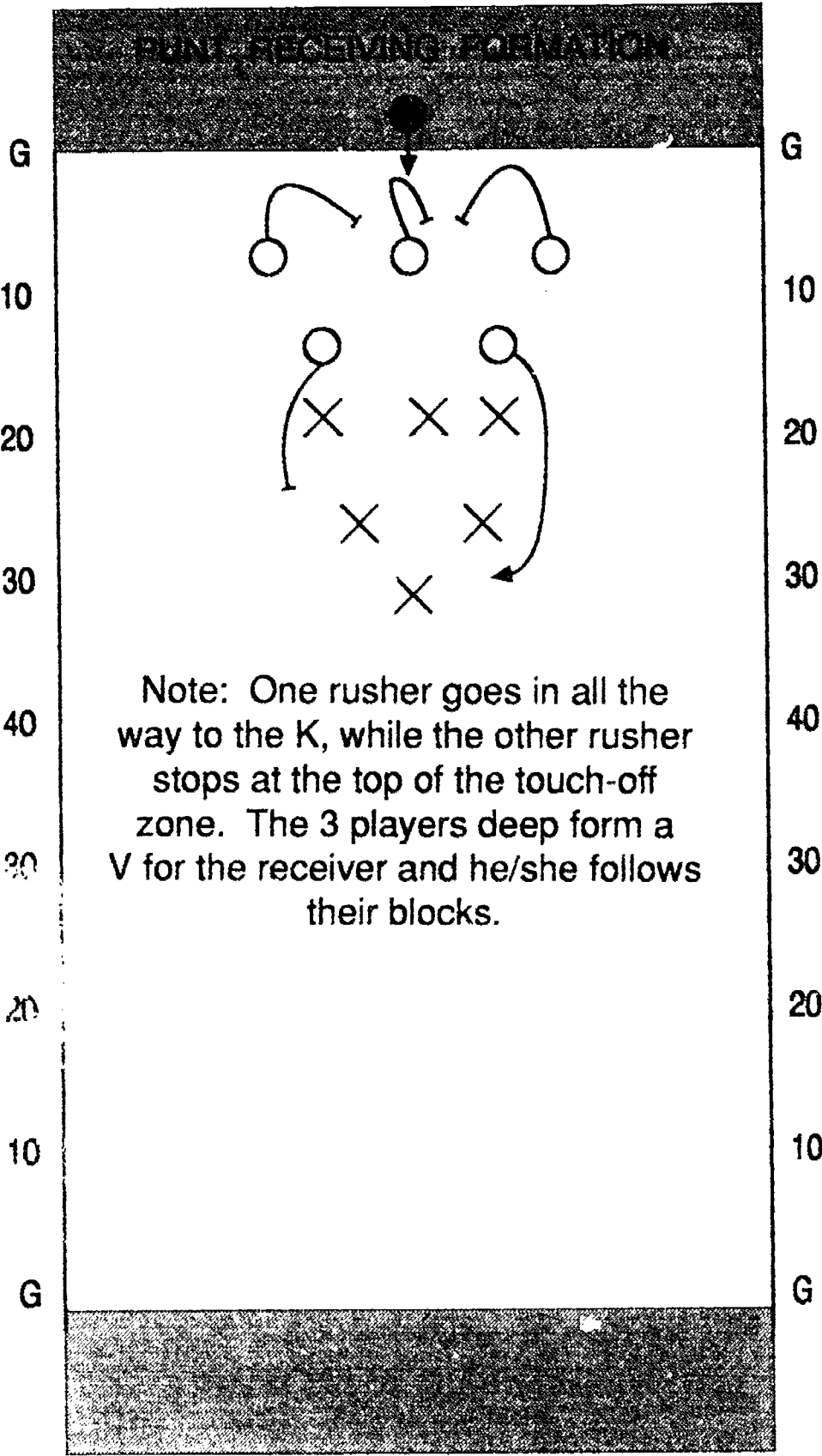
## PUNT RECEIVING FORMATION

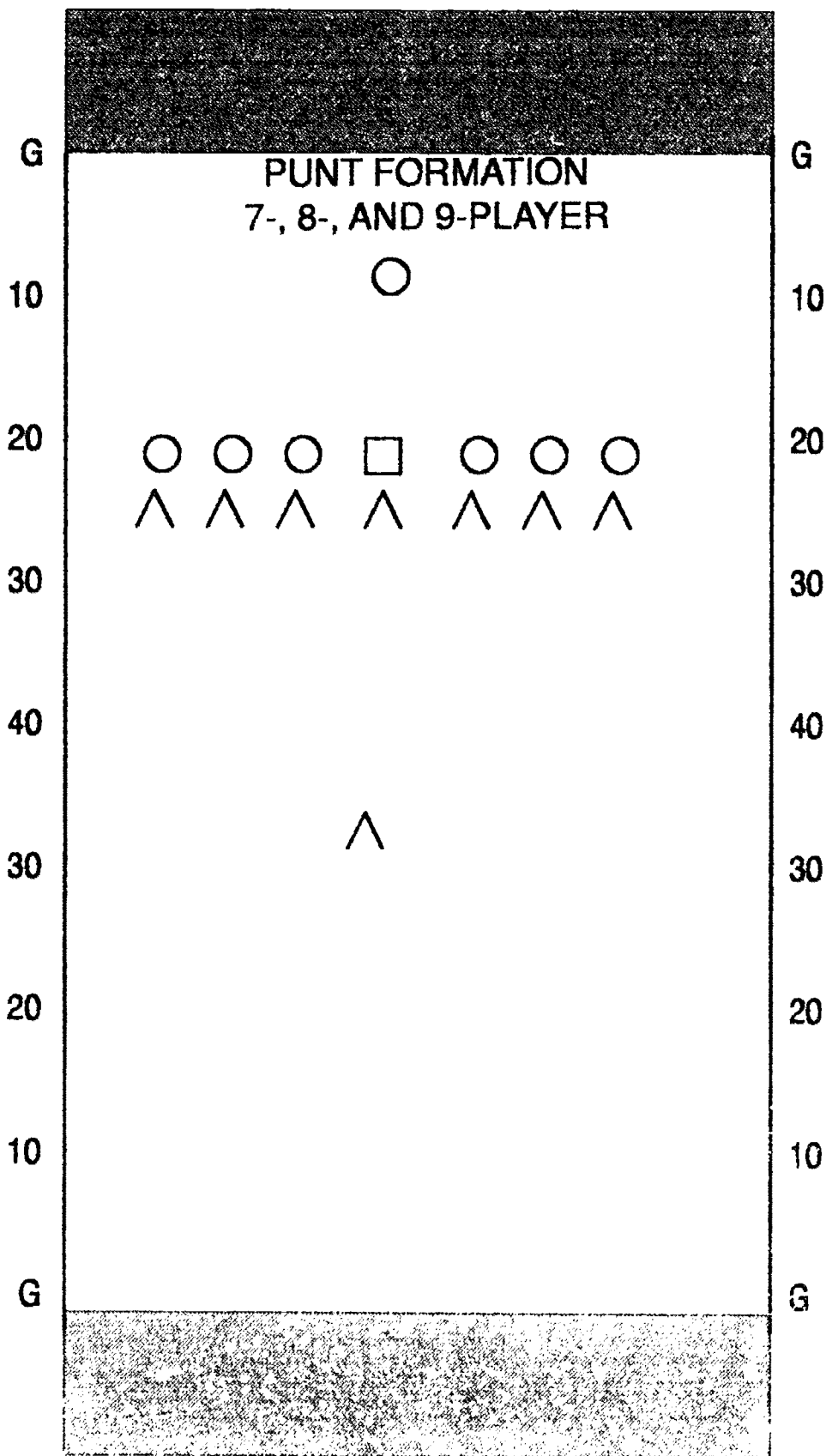
Punt receiving is done primarily by the defensive squad. The reason for this is that it is not always 100% SURE THAT THE OPPOSING TEAM WILL PUNT THE BALL. The best way to set the team up in 6-player (7, 8, 9-player will be covered in another paragraph) is a 2-3-1 defense. Then, if the opposition does run a play, this is the best standard defense. The team is also ready for the punt.

The two rushers up front check to see if there is a touch-off between the halfbacks. If this occurs, one rusher goes all the way in to pursue the ball and the other can go only as far as the depth of the touch-off player's position in relationship to the line of scrimmage. This is done to stop the possible fake. According to SARC rules, when the rushers see that it is a fake they can disregard the touch-off and rush right in. The three defensive backs drop back to form a V as in the kick-off return with the free safety catching the ball and running it right up the middle.

In 7, 8, and 9-player flagball, the punt is usually handled in a different manner. Usually the two teams line up head to head on the line of scrimmage. The punter drops back 5-7 yards and, with no snap, punts the ball. The receiving team has only one player back and he/she has no blockers. The only blocking allowed is at the line of scrimmage. This is done to prevent injury and is often used in games.



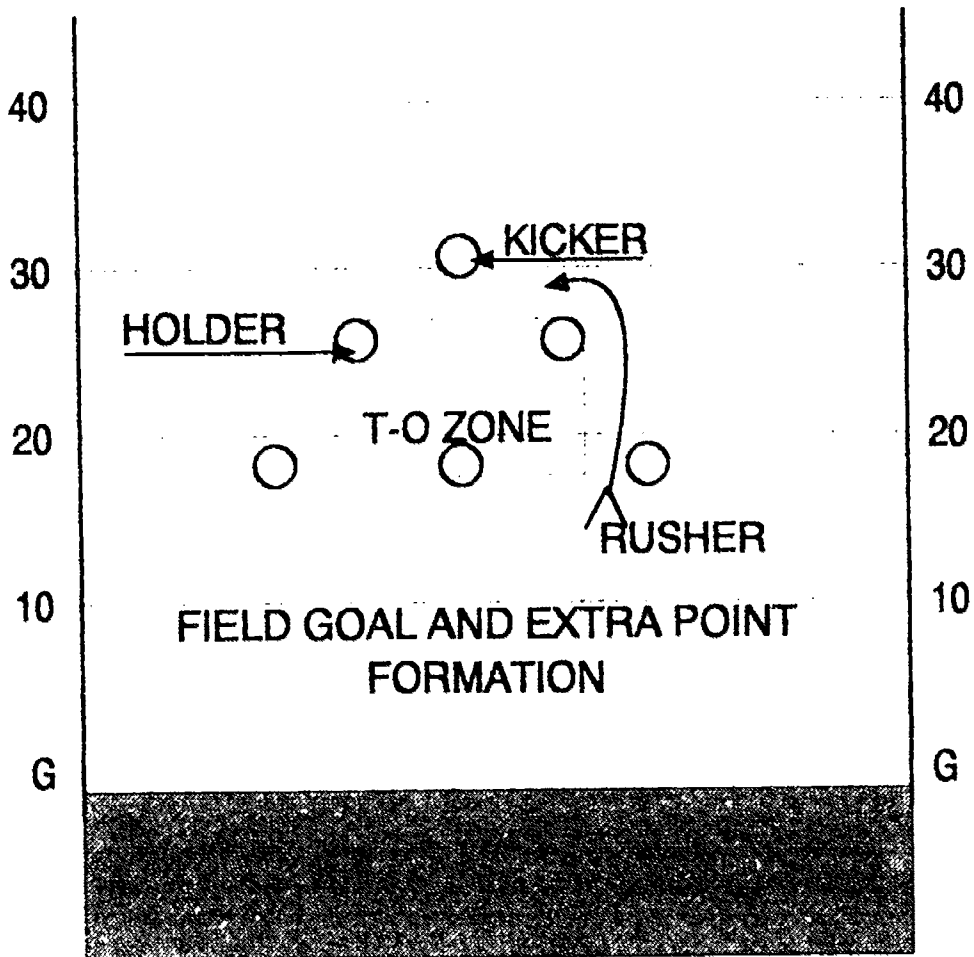




## FIELD GOALS AND EXTRA POINT FORMATION

This aspect of the game can win or lose big games for a team. How many games have been decided during the last few seconds with a field goal or an extra point? This portion of the game can be undoubtedly the most costly of all. Practice here is well worth the time and effort spent.

### DIAGRAM OF FIELD GOAL



In the above diagram the ends and center pass block while the two halfbacks touch-off and the kicker puts the ball through the uprights. Undoubtedly the most important part of this play is the snap and the hold. If either of these does not work the play will not be successful.

Practice time needs to be spent so these skills will be done without error.

## **DRILLS**

Practice makes perfect and perfect practice is what we want when practicing field goals and extra points. The drills used to make this happen are the following:

1. Kicker, snapper, and holder working together.
2. Entire team working together with no defense, practicing the field goal and the fake field goal.
3. Controlled scrimmage in game-like situations with full contact. All done at different distances and situations.

## **FAKE FIELD GOAL**

This is used in leagues where different point values are given for pass, run, or kick. The procedure is the same as for a fake punt.

## **ALTERNATE WAY TO SCORE EXTRA POINTS IN FLAGBALL**

In this author's experience, there are many ways to modify special teams. I will list some of these for you to think over and possibly implement in your program depending on your needs.

1. No kick-offs, just put the ball on the 20 yard line of play.
2. Punts - line up head to head on the line of scrimmage and each player gets one block. The receiving team has one player back and after the blocks on the line, he/she is on his/her own. No downfield blocking. In this case the punter drops back 5-7 yards and punts the ball with no rush.
3. Extra points:
  - a. Kick = 1 point
  - b. Run or pass = 2 points
  - c. Kick = 2 points
  - d. Run or pass = 1 point
  - e. Run or pass (with no goalpost) from the 5 yard line = 1 point
  - f. Run or pass (with no goalpost) from the 15 yard line = 2 points
  - g. Run (with no goalpost) = 2 points
  - h. Pass (with no goalpost) = 1 point
  - i. 3 yard line = 1 point (pass or run) NIRSA RULES
  - j. 10 yard line = 2 points (pass or run) NIRSA RULES
4. Field goals = 3 points

# CHAPTER 7

# COACHING

# STRATEGIES



## OUTLINE

- Offensive strategy
- Play selection
- Coaching the quarterback
- Defensive strategy
- Defensive selection
- Coaching the defensive quarterback
- Special teams strategy
- The mental game

## OFFENSIVE STRATEGY

Flagball is a wide open game that is exciting and fast paced. Passing opens up the run, which is just the opposite of tackle football. Many people feel running is not possible in flagball. They think it is a passing game, but I have found this is not true. If the team is taught the fundamentals of good blocking skills, the run can be very effective in flagball. Another point to consider is the mobility of the quarterback. If the quarterback has speed, this can be an effective tool to use in the

offensive scheme. The field is smaller for 6, 7, 8, and 9-player flagball compared to the size of the field for tackle football. But, there are fewer players and this gives the quarterback that much more room to run. This author feels it is important to emphasize these two points concerning running at the introduction of this chapter because they can make a big difference in what a team can do offensively.

## PLAY SELECTION

First of all, as a coach, you need to be planning your offensive game plan two to three plays ahead depending on the success of the previous play. The coach must have his/her options figured and calculated before the situation demands it. The following are considerations when selecting a play to be called:

1. What is the down?
2. How many yards for a first?
3. How much time is on the clock?
4. What is the score?
5. What strategy is working in this game?
6. What is this team's weakness?
7. What is your team's greatest strength?
8. Who are your money players (big play people)?

In the above list there are many factors to consider and this decision must be made in split-minute time. So, a coach must know his/her strengths and weaknesses, plays, personnel, and how to calculate his/her chances. Play selection should be discussed before game time. The game plan is outlined before the game to make the above process easier. The key point here is, if the game plan is not working, **CHANGE IT** - do something that will work. A team has to have that flexibility if they plan on success.

When running the offense against a zone defense, pass the ball and flood the zones. This means putting more offensive players in the area than the defensive have players to cover. **FOR EVERY ZONE DEFENSE THERE IS A WEAKNESS!** Find it and use it to your advantage. The run works the same way. When you read the weak zone against the run, call to that advantage. This is when audibilizing comes in. Using audibles can really help the team at the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be knowledgeable in all the above areas when selecting a play. He/she needs to feed the information into his/her computer brain and audiblize as he/she sees the situation arise.

When playing against the player-to-player type defense the offense can run misdirection plays. Doing crosses when passing and trying to pick players off to isolate an open player may work. If the offense can cause a defensive player to get taken out of the play one way or another, then his/her offensive player is open to receive the ball. This is the key when running plays against the player-to-player defense.



When a team runs a player-to-player/zone combination type defense, it makes it harder to read, but the same principles apply to try to take advantage of the called defense.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER IN OFFENSIVE STRATEGY:

1. Offensive players need to take the same stance each play so as not to give away the intent of the play.
2. A defensive team that is shifting around prior to the snap can be caught off guard with plays run on quick counts.
3. Second and short yardage is an ideal situation to waste a play and go for a touchdown.
4. Always vary the snap count to keep the defense guessing.
5. Try to establish the plays that work best for the team early in the game.
6. The passing game should be designed for more than one receiver.
7. Passes thrown on first down are more likely to be successful than those thrown on third down.
8. If behind early in the game, don't abandon the game plan to get even quickly. Stay with the game plan and use what has worked all season.
9. If behind late in a game, use short and medium-length passes. Also, a surprise run will still be effective. The defense will be looking for the long pass.
10. Yardage and field position gained by kicking is sometimes just as valuable as that gained by the offensive unit.

The hurry-up or two minute offense can be a big part of your offensive strategy. It pumps the team up and throws the defensive team into a frenzy. The hurry-up is an effective tool to be used not only in the last two minutes but many times when the original game plan or the current strategy is not successful.

### **COACHING THE QUARTERBACK TO THINK (RUN OR PASS)**

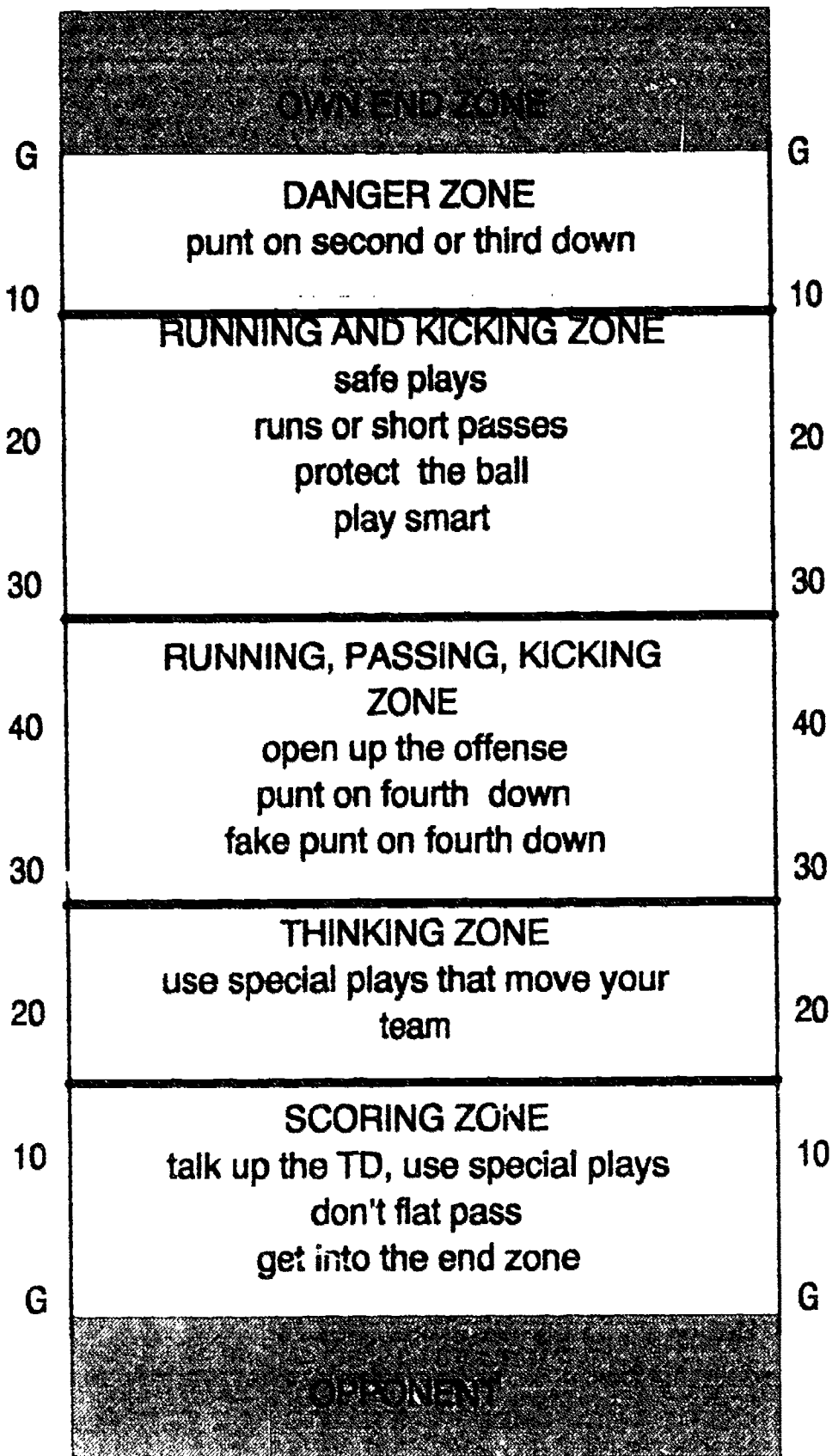
The quarterback is the leader of the team. He/she must provide the leadership on the field. On his/her shoulders rests much of the success or failure of the rest of the team. How much responsibility he/she is accounted depends on how much authority the coach gives him/her during the game. How many plays will he/she let the quarterback call? How often does he/she have the green light to audibilize? All this and more depends on the coach and his/her relationship and confidence in the quarterback. The quarterback must be as well informed of the offense and as adept at signal calling as the coach. Experience is the key word here. This may determine to what extent the coach allows the quarterback to call the plays or audibilize.

A list of general information can never be complete, but this is a partial list of recommendations for the quarterback:

1. Have confidence in yourself.
2. You are in charge; let your team know that in a tactful way.
3. Never let down mentally or physically.
4. Do not criticize your teammates. The coach should do the correcting.
5. Know your plays and each player's assignments.
6. Mix the plays up according to game plan, not according to who are your friends.
7. Confide in the coach.
8. Play cautiously if ahead in a tight game or ahead near the end of a game. An interception will not only kill the team morale, but may lose the game and the team's confidence in you as a quarterback.
9. Use your team's strengths against your opponent's weaknesses.
10. Don't worry about the outcome of the game to such an extent that the fun of playing is eliminated.

On the following page is a quarterback's map showing horizontal zones of play.





## DEFENSIVE STRATEGY



Defense is the name of the game in flagball. Players must be convinced of this fact. Everyone loves catching or throwing the touchdown and scoring. To play defense entails much hard work and seemingly not abundant reward for it. The coaching staff must work hard to let the defense know they are appreciated. I usually put my best players on the defensive unit because of the following reasons: The offense knows where the play is going and the defense does not. The defensive player must not only have enough athletic ability to read the play but also enough quickness, speed, and agility to beat the offensive player to the spot when the offensive player knows where he/she was going and the defensive player does not. That is why, in most cases, my most talented players play on the defensive squad. They may play some offense, but most definitely on the defense.

## DEFENSIVE SELECTION

Defense is one of the more crucial aspects of the game. Zone and player-to-player defenses are the main types. A crucial decision that the coach has to make is who plays what position on the defensive unit. Here are some of the key things to consider:

1. Who plays what position?
2. What defense to call when?
3. When to substitute in players for certain situations?
4. When to red dog (rush 3 or 4 players trying for a quarterback sack)?  
When to play prevent (do not allow the long pass; give them the short pass with no touchdown)?

It is also important to teach defensive units concealment of the defense they are going to run. Good quarterbacks can read defenses and pick them apart with the passing game and/or using the audible system to change the play at the line. The way to combat this is by calling the defense in the huddle and then using defensive signals such as colors to designate different defenses. For example, the defensive team lines up in red and then will run white. But, if the formation changes and there is a need for a defensive switch, then the live color will be called. The color following the live color will be the defense that will be run during that play. A more detailed example is the following: Defense huddles and calls "show red, run white, ready, break". They come up to the line and see that the formation has changed. The defensive captain who is calling dummy colors sees the new formation. He/she calls the live color and the right defense. The play is then run with the appropriate defensive formation for it. As you can see, the guessing game can get complicated. This is where the defensive coach and defensive captain must be working together to make those snap decisions.

#### POINTS TO REMEMBER IN DEFENSIVE STRATEGY:

1. The defense's job is not only to stop the opponent, but also to intercept and score.
2. Mix up the defensive formation and audibilize.
3. Always have a strong rush to pressure the quarterback.
4. Defensive backs need to remember to play the player and then the ball.
5. Talk, talk, talk, and talk some more.
6. Never let anyone behind you in the defensive backfield.
7. Hold your zone and break down when pulling flags. Whenever possible, let the player come to you.
8. Use the wrap around flag pull method and always go for two flags when possible.
9. Player-to-player defenses can be tiring. Remember - you need speed to compete.
10. Zone defenses allow for more interceptions.
11. Player-to-player takes care of most coverage mistakes and allows you to match player for player on a skill basis. Hopefully there will be no mismatches.
12. Always turn the play in. Don't let the play go outside.
13. Watch play action pass and don't get tricked out of your position.
14. When ahead in a game during the last quarter, play a deep zone to prevent a quick touchdown.

## **DEFENSIVE QUARTERBACK**

The defensive quarterback must be a student of the game and know his/her personnel well. He/she must also be a coachable player who listens to the coaching staff. This man/woman has the job of selecting the specific defense to be used against a particular opponent. More than likely he/she will have to make choices among several usable defenses and be able to audibilize when necessary. A list of the information the defensive quarterback and defensive coach will have to make could be endless. Here are some considerations:

1. The defensive quarterback should be thoroughly knowledgeable in the assignments of every player on all defensive alignments.
2. He/she needs to be aware of the present down, score, and field position.
3. He/she knows the team's strengths.
4. He/she knows the strengths and weaknesses of each defense and the theory behind each.
5. He/she should also know the signal or audible system so the he/she can quickly indicate the proposed defense to his/her teammates.
6. The defensive quarterback needs to be aware of the following information about his/her opponent:
  - a) What do the opponents like to do in certain situations?
  - b) What are the opponents' strengths and weaknesses?
  - c) What can the opponents do best in this play situation?
  - d) What are the opponents' most logical alternatives?

## **SPECIAL TEAMS STRATEGY**

### **KICK-OFF AND KICK-OFF RECEIVING:**

The basic strategy for the kick-off team is to kick the ball deep and cover the field with players staying in their lanes. Also, the team needs to kick the ball away from the opponent's best returner. Never let the play outside. The best flag pullers need to be on this team.

On receiving, the front line needs to drop back to set up the wedge or the wall for effective returns. The return men/women need to be the fastest and quick players on the team with the possibility of breaking things wide open. Also, the best blockers need to be present to set the blocks.

### **PUNT AND PUNT RECEIVING:**

Good punting starts with a good snap from center followed by good blocking. A high deep punt will give your team time to get down field and cover the return. Always punt away from the opponent's speed. The coverage must happen by filling the lanes to blanket the field.

Never let the play outside. Your best flag grabbers and quickest players need to be present on this team.

When receiving a punt, players must again drop back to set up the return. Their first step needs to be back with a knowledge of where the play will go. This team should possess some of the best blockers and quickest speed.

### FIELD GOAL AND EXTRA POINTS:

The kicker and coach need to know the extent and accuracy of his/her range. Go with the high percentage points. It is better to get 3 points instead of 0. If thinking of going for 8 points or a running play, remember, it is better to kick and come away with 7 points rather than with only 6 for the score. The best blockers need to be on this team to give the kicker as much protection as possible.

For blocking field goals and extra points, use your tallest players who can also jump well. They can make a difference in a block. The rushers need speed. The man/woman back deep also needs speed because, if it is a short kick, he/she can run it out.

### THE MENTAL GAME:

The longer I am involved with athletics, the more importance I place on the mental game. In fact, this author feels it is the difference in many cases between winning and losing, hitting and striking out, making a basket or missing it, catching the touchdown or dropping the ball. The mental outlook of an athlete is of utmost significance.

The mental game is a vital ingredient when working with athletes or athletic teams in their success. Let me explain my point. If both teams learn the fundamentals, spend time in the weight room, understand the strategies, and have equal skill level, what determines who will be successful? The player or team with the right mental attitude. In this text we don't have time to cover this subject, only bring it to your attention. Sport psychology is key. Learn what it can do for you and how it can make better athletes or athletic teams.



# CHAPTER 8

## RULES, MECHANICS, AND MODIFICATIONS



Flagball rules have evolved from tackle football rules over the years. Most of the people involved with flagball have at some time or another been associated with tackle ball. That is why there are so many similarities in the rules of the game. These similarities come from coaches who want their flagball program to resemble as closely as possible a tackle program. Then, there are other coaches who are not interested in trying to keep the game related to tackle. They are more concerned with the safety of the game than its comparability with tackle football. Hence, the variations in rules.

As I have traveled across the country I have found schools playing 6-player, 7-player, 8-player, and 9-player flagball. Obviously, the more players on the team and field, the more physical the game can become. When the game is played with more than 6 players on a team, the other players are not eligible to receive. Therefore, their job is to block. That is where the contact comes. Many of the flagball games are played very similarly to tackle, but no equipment is used. In this author's opinion, the 6-player formation is the safer game in which each player is eligible allowing everyone to be in the play. Then, the physical contact is a natural part of the game and not an added force.

The rule books this author recommends deal with 6 and 7-player flagball. One promotes contact blocking (limited for safety); the other stresses noncontact or screen blocking to limit contact even more. When choosing the rule book for your school or league, you must weigh the consequences and evaluate your philosophy into what fits best. It is not this author's intention to mandate which rules to use. Either one of these rule books will help flagball be a better game in your program.

The first rule book we will discuss is published by NIRSA—National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association. To receive the information rule book, officials' manual, etc. write: National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association, 850 SW 15th Street, Corvallis, OR 97333-4145 or call (503) 737-2088.

NIRSA has a sports officials' development center which features training materials, officials kits, and instructional videotapes. There is a lot of quality information available from this organization and I would encourage you to call or write and see how NIRSA can help you run a quality program.

The following is a beginning section of NIRSA's rule book to introduce the origin and philosophy of NIRSA.

## MOVING TOWARD A STANDARDIZED FOOTBALL CODE

The National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association Flag & Touch Football Rules Committee was created 12 years ago and charged with the responsibility of developing a standardized code of rules, interpretations, and officials mechanics. Unlike most other intramural team, dual and individual sports, there was no nationally recognized set of flag and touch football rules.

Prior to developing rule proposals in 1982 the Committee reviewed all flag and touch football related literature. After examining this information it was decided to conduct several national research projects concerning injury frequencies as related to the rules. In addition, surveys of the Nation's colleges and universities were initiated to determine which rules and interpretations were being administered. The results of these massive research projects played a very integral role during those early decision making processes.

The First, Second, Third, and Fourth Editions of the NIRSA Flag and Touch Football Rules have been very successful. Hundreds of colleges, universities, recreation departments, high schools, YMCA/YWCAs, Department of Army-Europe, and the Department of the Navy have adopted these rules. Amazingly, the entire First, Second, Third, and Fourth Editions, over 30,000 copies, were sold out.

Several major projects were undertaken by the rules committee to make this Fifth Edition an even better book. These include:

1. Historically, experienced officials have used "If in Doubts" as a guide to help them make the tough judgment calls in this fast-

paced and exciting game. Many of these have been developed and used by the outstanding group of students who officiate the National Invitational Flag Football Championships each year in New Orleans. They are an excellent teaching tool when training new officials. "If in Doubts" have been placed in appropriate places throughout the book

2. When the Rulebook Editor joined the NFL Officiating Staff, experienced NFL officials emphasized over and over again about the MENTAL CHECKLIST. Developed for each officiating position the checklist contained "key words," easily committed to memory, which made sense of so many players moving in different directions. Football officiating requires officials to be "people watchers" rather than just "ball watchers.. Mental checklists have been developed for each position. Recreational sports professionals should use them in their training programs as one of the basic fundamentals taught.
3. The most commonly asked question of NIRSA Football Committee members is "How Do I Convert from Contact to Screen Blocking Flag Football?" "A Conversion Prospectus" has been developed for the purpose. The Prospectus contains related sportsmanship, participation and injury research studies, institutions which play NIRSA Rules, rationale for the change, and a detailed checklist to effect the switch.
4. A large portion of the Rules meetings have centered again on the Corecreational Game. Even with rule changes made two years ago, the game is dominated by male players. Colleges and universities volunteered to use experimental rules. Research data was gathered and analyzed. The new rules will allow male and female players a near equal role in the contest's outcome.
5. Through the help of several hundred NIRSA members, a world-wide survey of institutions who play flag and touch football was completed. Through this research detailed list of institutions who play NIRSA Rules was developed.

The Fifth edition of the NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules and Official's Manual is a culmination of this effort. It is a continuing effort by the NIRSA membership to standardize the rules and mechanics for this great game.

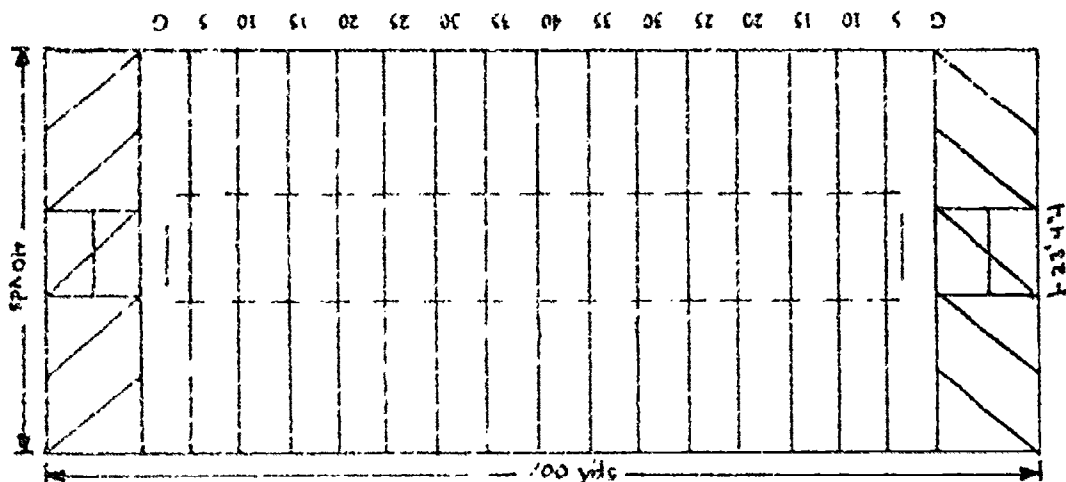
The NIRSA Rules and Official's Manual is revised biannually. The Committee will conduct an open forum at the NIRSA Annual Conference to discuss them and make recommendations for subsequent editions. We seek and need input. After all, these are YOUR Rules and Mechanics.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NIRSA, Flag and Touch Football Rules and Officials Manual, 1991 & 1992, pp 8 - 10



The manual explains more valuable programming tools for the flag and touch football administrator. All this information can be obtained from the above address. Let's look at some of the key points made in the NIRSA Flag and Touch Football Rules and Official's Manual.

1. The size of the field is 40 yards x 100 yards including end zones.



2. 20 yards for a first down and play (7-player flagball).
3. The ball is dead when it hits the ground. A 3-flag, flagbelt is recommended.
4. Kicking and Punting rules:

**Kickoff**-is a free kick to start the game or half from a team's 20-yard line.

**Protected Scrimmage Kick** - A protected scrimmage kick is made by Team A under restrictions which prohibit either team from advancing beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked.

**Fair Catch (legal)** - A player may call a fair catch by extending one arm above his/her head and waving it laterally from side to side more than once.

5. The game is played in two 20-minute halves, with two timeouts per half per team.
6. Offensive Blocking:

#### Article 1. Offensive Screen Blocking

The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The

screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his/her balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

## **Article 2. Screen Blocking Fundamentals**

A player who screens shall not:

- A. When he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him or her.
- B. When he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her.
- C. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- D. After assuming his/her legal screening position move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path as his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

## **Article 3. Blocking and Interlocked Interference**

Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

## **Article 4. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense**

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgement of the official. A blocker may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance.<sup>2</sup>

### **7. Scoring goes as follows**

Touchdown = 6 points

Conversion = 1 point; 3 yards out

Conversion = 2 points; 10 yards out

<sup>2</sup> NIKSA Flag and Touch Football Rules and Officials Manual, 1991 & 1992, pp. 64 - 65.

8. Corecreation rules are covered in detail in the NIRSA rule book. The rationale for these rules is to even the level of competition between men and women playing flagball. Samples of some of these rules are:
  - a) 9 points will be given for a woman scoring a touchdown; 6 points for men.
  - b) On a team with 8 players, 4 must be men and 4 women. For a 7 player team, 4 will be men and 3 women. 3 men and 3 women will comprise a 6 player team.
9. Mercy rule - If a team is 17 or more points (corecreational - 23 points) ahead at the two minute warning, the referee will call the game over.
10. If the game is tied, the ball is put on the 10-yard line and each team has 4 opportunities to score. The first team to do so wins. If the ball is intercepted and run for touchdown, the team scoring wins. If it is intercepted and the team does not score, then possession changes and the game continues.
11. The remainder of the rule book is an official's manual and covers general principles, duties, and 2, 3, and 4-player mechanics.

The second rule book we will mention is the SDA-SARC FLAGBALL RULES ILLUSTRATED, Seventh-day Adventist Sports Activities Rules Committee. To obtain information about this rule book write: HPER Department, La Sierra University, Riverside, CA 92515 or phone (714) 785-2082.

To introduce this rule book, the following is the Introduction and Code of Conduct which will familiarize you with the origin and the philosophy of the book.

## Introduction

The function of the Seventh-day Adventist Sports Activities Rules Committee (SDA-SARC) is to develop and distribute flagball rules for use in SDA academies, colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.

SDA-SARC was formed and the first rules compiled at the SDA college physical educators meeting in 1968. The rules were revised in 1969, 1972, 1974, and 1980. At the 1980 meeting it was decided to include optional rules for Hawaiian Flagball, No Block Flagball and Restricted Block Flagball.

Seventh-day Adventist colleges have been playing Flagball in intramural programs for over 25 years. Each had developed its own rules until 1968. The rules in this book are, thus, a product of the experience of numerous physical educators over many years.

The game is appropriate for physical education classes and intramural programs from grade 7 through adulthood. The rule books have been used as student texts in flagball units in SDA academies and colleges.

## **A Code of Conduct**

No set of rules is any better than the **SPIRIT** in which they are adhered to by those who play by them and those who are responsible for their enforcement.

The well-being of the player must be kept paramount in a modified contact game that has as its essence the absence of protective player equipment. Players should be made aware of their responsibility in the avoidance of unnecessary injury.

The officials are the key to keeping unnecessarily rough play out of the game. They can determine the tempo at which a game will be played by close calling and maintaining the spirit of sportsmanship on the field.

Coaches and administrators have a responsibility to see to it that players who are continually unnecessarily rough are either brought under control or eliminated from play.

These statements are in no way intended to curtail hard, clean play, but rather to eliminate from the game any threat element that adds only ill-will and unnecessary injuries to the game.<sup>3</sup>

Let's examine some of the significant rules that are contained in the text.

1. Field size is 40 yds x 100 yds including end zones.
2. 15 yards for a first down.
3. 6-player flagball.
4. The ball is dead when it strikes the ground.

5. Kicking and Punting Rules:

Punting - There is a touch-off zone to protect the rusher and the kicker. There is no blocking the punt except from your own side of the line of scrimmage.

Field Goals- Same as punting.

Kick-off- The ball is live for the offense in all kicking situations and the defense must have two players within 10-15 yds. of the kicking team.

<sup>3</sup> SDA-SARC Flagball Rules, pp. iii - iv.

6. Game is played in two 20-minute halves with two time outs per half.
7. The quarterback cannot directly run the ball; there must be an exchange.
8. Section 1. Blocking
  - Art. 1. An offensive blocker must have his hand or arm in contact with his body when it is in contact with an opponent.
  - Art. 2. A blocker may not lock his hands or use his elbow or forearm in such a manner that it is moving faster than his shoulder when it contacts an opponent.
  - Art. 3. Players shall not use a flying or rolling type block.
  - Art. 4. A blocker may not use his head in a butting or spearing action.
  - Art. 5. Blocking below the waist is not permitted.
9. Section 2. Defensive Techniques
  - Art. 1. No player on defense shall use a stance with a hand on the ground.
  - Art. 2. No player on defense shall block or use a shoulder, elbow, or forearm to attack an opponent. He MAY use his hand, arm, or elbow in close to his body to absorb a block initiated by an opponent.
  - Art. 3. A player on defense MAY use his hands to ward off an opponent's block. He may grasp, push, or pull an opponent aside in an effort to reach the runner, but he may not hold.
  - Art. 4. A player on defense may not steal the ball from the runner. The flag must be played at all times.<sup>4</sup>
10. Tackling is defined as doing anything other than pulling the flag. The runner has the responsibility of avoiding the defender; he cannot run over the defender.

You can see that SARC Flagball Rules has done a commendable job of writing a rulebook that can be used when playing contact flagball.

In summary, colleges and universities have been using many different types of flagball rules. From my experience I have found that using one of the two mentioned texts would add strength to your program.

<sup>4</sup> SDA-SARC Flagball Rules, p. 37

# CHAPTER 9

# CLASSROOM

# AND COACHING



## OUTLINE

- Class organization
- Outline of 10 week flagball unit
- Skills test for class
- Evaluation for class
- Athletic team practice outline

## CLASS ORGANIZATION

The instructor must do two things when starting a class in flagball. One, have an organized plan of action for a good learning environment. Two, divide the athletic ability up into equal groups or teams for good balance of instruction and later for even and fair competition during the tournament. The following is one method that could be used to perform the above procedures.

The first thing a teacher wants to do is put the students into evenly matched teams. This is done outside of the classroom by the teacher him/herself. Put the students on teams according to positions. Each team needs a quarterback, center, two halfbacks, and two ends. In



class the students can play both offense and defense. The teacher's job is to balance the athletic talent when filling out teams.

During the first one or two class periods, rate your players on a 1 to 5 basis, with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. Remember, this is only an evaluation of current skill level. You are not pre-judging these athletes by any means. This is a way to evenly balance the existing raw talent of the class. If you have had these students in previous classes, it may not be necessary to rate them.

Once the teacher has the teams chosen by placing equal numbers on each team and checking the running total, he/she is ready for the first day of instruction. Then students will be able to do the calisthenics together and pass patterns with their own quarterback and receivers. Most of the drills will be done in their squads or teams.

### **COED CLASS:**

When teaching coed classes, the above system works well. The only possible change would be to make sure that all teams have equal numbers of men and women on them. Some instructors modify the rules for coed games, such as men cannot block women, etc. I have found in my coed classes in high school and college that no rule modification is necessary. But this option is always left up to the individual instructor. The following class schedule and teaching unit can be used for men's, women's, or coed classes.

### **SAFETY ISSUES:**

Safety is always a great concern to physical educators. The following are safety suggestions when conducting a class, Intramural Program, or Extramural team.

- a. No belt loops or pockets allowed on pants of participants.
- b. No screw-in type cleat allowed. Only molded soccer-type shoe is permissible.
- c. All shirts or jerseys must be tucked in at all times.
- d. Unnecessary roughness applies to any specific act or exertion of force that, in the opinion of the official or instructor, will tend to CAUSE INJURY, ILL-WILL, or the game to become EXCESSIVELY ROUGH. This could happen on a legal block or play, but, in the judgment of the official or instructor, is unacceptable.
- e. Mouth guards are encouraged to be worn during all play.
- f. Extra padding is discouraged because it has been found that the more extra padding that is allowed, the rougher the game becomes.
- g. The last two areas are of extreme importance. The officiating must be top notch and handled in a very professional manner to keep the game under control and running smoothly. Also, all the participants in the class or on the teams should be

fundamentally sound and have a good understanding of the rules. A good understanding of the rules includes having every participant pass a written test.

### **THE FOLLOWING IS A TYPICAL CLASS SCHEDULE:**

- 10:00 - 10:10 Students jog two laps for warm up while the instructor takes record.
- 10:10 - 10:20 Students stretch and do calisthenics. After the teams are selected, they will do pass patterns with their teams after the laps.
- 10:20 - 10:45 Instruction by the teacher on the fundamentals:
- a. Chalk talk
  - b. Demonstration of skill
  - c. Walk through skill
  - d. Half speed
  - e. Full speed with pads
  - f. Full speed
  - g. All drills must be game-like.
- 10:45 - 10:50 Wind sprints
- 10:50 - 11:00 Showers

Let's take a good look at what a typical 10 week unit would involve. The following is an example of a flagball unit by the week and the activities that would be included.

### **OUTLINE OF A 10-WEEK FLAGBALL UNIT**

#### **WEEK 1:**

- a. Introduction to class format; select teams.
- b. Teach pass catching fundamentals and pass patterns
- c. Note: have individual teams throw and run pass patterns every day in class as part of warm up.

#### **WEEK 2:**

- a. Teach pass defense individual fundamentals and drills.
- b. Work on the position of linebacker and defensive back.
- c. Note: as the teams run pass patterns, put one defender in the warm up drill and then add two more. Make it as game-like as possible.
- d. Start the blocking sequence - basic stance, pass block, open the hole block. Defensive rushing is covered at the same time as pass block.



- e. All blocking drills will use pads until the athletes understand the proper technique.

### **WEEK 3:**

- a. Blocking instruction continues with the following blocks: cross block, trap block, hook block, and combination blocking.
- b. Flag grabbing and defense.
- c. In running these drills make them game-like and put the defense with the blocking.

### **WEEK 4:**

- a. Teach offensive huddle and different formations.
- b. Draw formations; line teams up in formations and run simple plays.
- c. Run plays with no defense, two to three in each formation.

### **WEEK 5:**

- a. Run offensive plays with shifts, hand-offs, and pitches.
- b. Cover defensive formations and then controlled scrimmage.
- c. Draw and walk through special teams kick-off and punt returns.

### **WEEK 6:**

- a. Continue to use controlled scrimmages with offensive and defensive teams.
- b. Run through kick-offs and punts in a scrimmage situation.
- c. At the end of this week give a written test over the rules. Note: all students must pass written test before they play in the class tournament.

### **WEEK 7:**

Games throughout the week. Tournament time.

### **WEEK 8:**

Games continue with class tournament.

### **WEEK 9:**

- a. Games continue with class tournament.
- b. Skills tests start at the end of the week.

### **WEEK 10:**

- a. Skills tests continue during the first part of the week.
- b. The final written exam over skills and strategy during the last part of the week.

## **DRILLS AND LEARNING PROGRESSIONS HAVE BEEN COVERED IN THE INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS**

### **SKILLS TEST FOR CLASS**

Grading and evaluation are part of the learning environment and the instructor must try to be fair, realistic, and practical. The following are samples of skills tests that this author has conducted. I feel they give a fair evaluation of an athlete's skill level.

1. Subjective evaluation on pass patterns on a 1-5 scale rating.
2. Pass catching percentage out of 20 pass catching opportunities. (If it touches their hands it counts as an opportunity.)
3. Pass catching percentage out of 20 pass catching opportunities with defense.
  - a. The same rules apply as above to the offense.
  - b. The defense is scored in the following way: if touched by defender = 1 point; if knocked down by defender = 2 points; if intercepted by the defender = 3 points.
4. Flag pull drill (towel drill) with 20 opportunities. Each flag counts as a point. For each opportunity the flag grabber can receive up to two points.
5. Subjective evaluation on open the hole block on a 1-5 scale rating.
6. Pass block and defensive rush drill run simultaneously. The scoring goes as follows:  
Both students are lined up in a towel drill situation and are timed at the snap to crossing their own endline. The lower the number, the better the score for the rusher. The higher the number, the better the score for the blocker.
7. Run the tip drill with 10 opportunities to catch the ball.
8. Skill grade is also made up of the tournament performance in the following areas:
  - a. Flag pull - pulled versus missed
  - b. Pass catch - completed versus missed
  - c. Credit for runs over 10 yards
  - d. Credit for touchdowns scored
  - e. Credit for extra points made
  - f. Interceptions
  - g. Knock downs

**NOTE:** The reason for using the tournament game score is it is more realistic than a drill score. Most people can catch a high percentage of passes in a drill, but the real test is their game performance. It must also be noted that these tournament scores can only help the student's grade and not hurt it. Obviously some athletes will have more opportunities than others. So, the entire tournament skill grade is based on percentage of opportunities. The way this works is, if a student gets a low tournament

skill score, it has no effect on his class total grade. But, if the student scores high on the skill grade, it can only help that student's grade. For example, it may change a grade from a B+ to an A-. Using this tournament score is only a positive factor and can make the tournament games more meaningful.

## EVALUATION FOR CLASS

The final grade in physical education is always tough to evaluate. The grading process must be explained and understood by the students. The following is a sample of one way to evaluate a flagball class:

Attendance	10%
Uniform and participation	15%
Skills test	40%
Written test quizzes	20%
Final	15%
Total	<hr/> 100%

## ATHLETIC TEAM PRACTICE

The following is an example of a team practice lasting two hours. With the following breakdown of groups and activities, the athletes do not get bored or lose their enthusiasm for the game.

3:00 - 3:30	Team stretching and jogging laps.	
3:30 - 3:45	Team meeting and affirmations (the mental game).	
3:45 - 4:06	Flagball fundamentals	
	OFFENSE	DEFENSE
3:45 - 3:52	Hock block - no rush/rush	Flag pull on back, tip drill
3:52 - 3:59	Open the hole block-no rush/rush	Pass defense - tip drill, Aski drill
3:59 - 4:06	Pass reception - turn around/bell ringer	Pursuit drills A and B

## TEAM CONCEPTS - OFFENSE AND DEFENSE IN THEIR OWN AREAS

- 4:06 - 4:55**      **Work on PLAYS, FORMATIONS, AUDIBLES,  
SHIFTING, AND SMALL GROUP TYPE DRILLS.**
- 4:30 - 4:55**      **Controlled scrimmage or special teams.**
- 4:55 - 5:00**      **40-yard sprints**

# FLAGBALL FOR THE '90S

Timothy Martin Windemuth

Timothy Martin Windemuth is assistant professor of health, physical education, and recreation at Walla Walla College, College Place, Washington. He completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in health and physical education from Eastern Michigan University and previously taught at Christian Academy and Greenwood Academy. He is a national member in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and has been active in helping start F.C.A. programs at several colleges.

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